

# **Perspectives on Immortality and Eternal Life in the Book of Wisdom and the Gospel of John:**

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## **A Conceptual Analysis Based on Metaphorical Structuring**

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**Perspectives on Immortality and Eternal Life in the Book of Wisdom and the Gospel of John:**

**A Conceptual Analysis Based on Metaphorical Structuring**

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## Abbreviations

The abbreviations in this doctoral thesis are taken from Patrick H. Alexander et al., eds., *Society of Biblical Literature Handbook of Style*, 2nd ed. (Atlanta, Ga: SBL Press, 2014), and Siegfried M. Schwertner, *Internationales Abkürzungsverzeichnis für Theologie und Grenzgebiete*, 3rd ed. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2014).

Abbreviations that differ from it are the following:

ANLEX	<i>Friberg Analytical Lexicon to the Greek New Testament</i>
BRS	Biblical Resource Series
COQG	Christian Origins and the Question of God
GNT	Guide to the New Testament
GRK	Thayer, <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament</i>
IBT	Interpreting Biblical Texts
LS	<i>The Abridged Liddell-Scott Greek-English Lexicon</i>
NTC	New Testament in Context
OCB	<i>The Oxford Companion to the Bible</i>
OCBC	The Oxford Church Bible Commentary
SB	Schocken Books
SCL	Sather Classical Lectures
TTCABS	T&T Clark Approaches to Biblical Studies
UBS	Newman, Barclay M. <i>A Concise Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament</i>
own reference	reference added by Réka-Ibolya Valentin
own trans.	translation by Réka-Ibolya Valentin

# 1 Introduction

The idea of immortality is a fundamental principle of religion; it relates to the existential questions regarding the meaning of life and suffering. Broadly speaking, the concept of immortality involves the idea that there is some kind of existence beyond death, more exactly, that human life continues despite death. The Wisdom of Solomon clearly claims existence beyond the earthly life and develops essential ideas about human life and immortality.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, the Gospel of John that arises from a similar cultural milieu<sup>2</sup> also deals extensively with the idea of eternal life. The relation between these two texts has been addressed long ago, and the parallels between wisdom literature and the Gospel of John have been discussed by several scholars. However, the studies conducted seem to be limited given that they consider several wisdom texts and ideas without reflecting in depth to particular pieces of literature and particular concepts. The following discussion, therefore, focuses on the similarities between the Gospel of John and a single piece of wisdom literature, the Wisdom of Solomon, and analyses the concepts of immortality and eternal life.

Concerning the background of Wis,<sup>3</sup> the majority of scholars propose an Alexandrian setting for Wis<sup>4</sup> as opposed to a Syrian one.<sup>5</sup> Without intending an extensive discussion on this regard, I would like to position myself to see Wis and John<sup>6</sup> placed within a timeframe which allows for

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<sup>1</sup> The concept of immortality can be related to resurrection (Cf. Nicholas Thomas Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God*, COQG 3 [Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2003], 108-109, 130), but this latter issue does not come into focus in this thesis.

<sup>2</sup> I would like to express my gratitude to Thomas J. Kraus, who gave me guidance with regards the dating of P<sup>52</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> From now on I refer to it as Wis. Whenever the reference is to wisdom literature/concepts or to the spirit of the Lord, *wisdom* is used; the context will make clear which meaning is intended.

<sup>4</sup> Among others, see David Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 43 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1979), 25; Moyna McGlynn, *Divine Judgment and Divine Benevolence in the Book of Wisdom*, WUNT2/139 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 9-11; James M. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence on the Book of Wisdom and Its Consequences*, AnBib 41 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1970), 151; J. A. F. Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon: In the Revised Version*, CBSC (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1909; repr., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922), xvi.

<sup>5</sup> Dieter Georgi, *Weisheit Salomos*, JSHRZ 3/4 (Gütersloh: Mohn, 1980), 395-397, and Frank Zimmermann, "The Book of Wisdom: Its Language and Character," *JQR* 57 (1966): 133-134, are the supporters of the latter theory.

<sup>6</sup> The Gospel of John will be referred to as John, the Fourth Gospel, or the Gospel from now on.

the following hypothesis, that is to say, to understand that they arise from a relatively close period which is yet not too close to allow for John's use of Wis' framework. Among main arguments<sup>7</sup> for positioning Wis in Alexandria<sup>8</sup> is its similarity in thought and language to Philo of Alexandria.<sup>9</sup> Apart from that it is observed that in the Exodus account of Wis (chaps. 11-19), the account of the Egyptian plague is extended compared to that of the Canaanites.<sup>10</sup> Then again Wis 17:17 (17:16 LXX) might refer to ἀναχωρήσις,<sup>11</sup> the flights of the peasants that "crushed by taxes and tolls, left their village to withdraw (ἀναχωρεῖν, ἐκχωρεῖν) either to a place of asylum or to some village where they might be hidden, or even to swamps or the desert."<sup>12</sup> Another reason is the influence of Middle Platonism on Wis, which was flourishing in the Alexandria of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC.<sup>13</sup> As to the date, there are basically two suggestions made by modern scholarship. An early Roman dating is argued based on the words that do not appear in the Greek literature before the 1<sup>st</sup> century<sup>14</sup> and the reference to the idolatrous worship in Wis 14:17 that is more compatible with Roman rule.<sup>15</sup> Further arguments are that the term κράτησις in Wis 6:3 that is often used in the Greek papyri refers to the Roman conquest of Egypt,<sup>16</sup> and that the death-pact in Wis 1:16 may have been influenced by the defeat of Anthony and Cleopatra at Actium (31 BC).<sup>17</sup> Another suggestion is made for the reign of Caligula.<sup>18</sup> The context from which Wis

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<sup>7</sup> I follow the order of the arguments summarized in McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 9-11.

<sup>8</sup> For the background and addressees, see Daniel J. Harrington, *Invitation to the Apocrypha* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 54-57, and Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 146-151, who argue that the addressees of Wis are the Jews of Alexandria attracted by Hellenism.

<sup>9</sup> Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 59-63.

<sup>10</sup> An observation made by John J. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997), 178.

<sup>11</sup> Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 25, 309-310.

<sup>12</sup> André-Jean Festugière, *Personal Religion among the Greeks*, SCL 26 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1954), 57-58.

<sup>13</sup> See John J. Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem: Jewish Identity in the Hellenistic Diaspora*, 2nd ed., BRS (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Dove Booksellers: Livonia, MI, 2000), 195; Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 3.

<sup>14</sup> Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 20-24. For the other presumptions, see Chrysostome Larcher, *Le Livre de la Sagesse ou la Sagesse de Salomon*, 3 vols., *EBib* 2/1, 3, 5 (Paris: Gabalda, 1983-1985), 1:141-146.

<sup>15</sup> Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 179.

<sup>16</sup> Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 22, 153; Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 179. McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 11 n. 45, notes that this was originally suggested by G. Scarpata, "Ancora sull' autore del Libro della Sapienza," *RivB* 15 (1967): 174-175.

<sup>17</sup> A suggestion made by Larcher, *Le Livre*, 1:157.

<sup>18</sup> Among the supporters of this latter theory are Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 20-24; Samuel Cheon, *The Exodus Story in the Wisdom of Solomon: A Study in Biblical Interpretation*, JSPSup 23 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997), 13. A. T. S. Goodrick, ed., *The Book of Wisdom: With Introduction and Notes*, OCB (London:

arises allows for apocalyptic eschatology, wisdom tradition and Greek philosophy as the most influential sources of the concept of immortality in Wis.<sup>19</sup>

With regard to the dating and composition of the Gospel,<sup>20</sup> I do not want to take a position, but note that most scholars assume a final redaction finished by 90-110.<sup>21</sup> As place of origin,

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Rivingtons, 1913), 13-17, also suggested it. The reign of Caligula is supposed to account for the story of the persecuted righteous in Wis 2 and 5, but as McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 12, rightly argues, this claim depends on how one reads the persecution of the righteous, as a historical event or as a fundamental conflict between the evil and the good. I am inclined to accept an early Roman dating; the persecution of the righteous seems too general to describe an actual persecution. As Giuseppe Bellia and Angelo Passaro, "Infinite Passion for Justice," in *The Book of Wisdom in Modern Research: Studies on Tradition, Redaction, and Theology*, ed. Angelo Passaro and Giuseppe Bellia, DCLY 2005 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005), 311, concludes: "the theme of the persecution of the just seems to assume more the model of an ethical dissertation on the superiority of justice over evil than the exhortatory character of a burning reflection, commenting on a real happening in which the author is personally involved."

<sup>19</sup> See George W. E. Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism*, HTS 26 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press; London: Oxford University Press, 1972); John J. Collins, "Cosmos and Salvation: Jewish Wisdom and Apocalyptic in the Hellenistic Age," in Collins, *Seers, Sybils and Sages in Hellenistic-Roman Judaism*, John J. Collins, JSJ.S 54 (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 317-338; John J. Collins, "The Root of Immortality: Death in the Context of Jewish Wisdom," in Collins, *Seers, Sybils and Sages*, 351-367; John J. Collins, "Apocalyptic Eschatology in Philosophical Dress in the Wisdom of Solomon," in *Shem in the Tents of Japhet: Essays on the Encounter of Judaism and Hellenism*, ed. James L. Kugel, JSJ.S 74 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 93-107; Alan F. Segal, *Life after Death: A History of the Afterlife in the Religions of the West*, ABRL (New York: Doubleday, 2004), 385-386; Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 33-89; Jack T. Sanders, "Wisdom, Theodicy, Death, and the Evolution of Intellectual Traditions," *JSJ* 36 (2005): 273-274; John J. Collins, "The Reinterpretation of Apocalyptic Traditions in the Wisdom of Solomon," in Passaro and Bellia, *The Book of Wisdom in Modern Research*, 143-157.

<sup>20</sup> For the composition of the Gospel, see Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, ed. Francis J. Moloney, ABRL (New York: Doubleday, 2003), who suggests a three stage development in the composition of the Gospel with material already from 30 BC—his earlier suggestion, in Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2 vols., AB 29, 29A (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966-1970; repr., AYB 29, 29A; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), was a five stage composition. For other theories, see Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, ed. R. W. N. Hoare and J. K. Riches, trans. G. R. Beasley-Murray (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971); Charles Kingsley Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text* (London: SPCK, 1955); Barnabas Lindars, ed., *The Gospel of John*, NCB (London: Oliphants, 1972); R. Alan Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design*, FFNT (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983). A good summary of the theories of composition and sources can be found in Paul N. Anderson, *The Riddles of the Fourth Gospel: An Introduction to John* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2011), 95-124, where he discusses the weaknesses and strengths of the approaches.

<sup>21</sup> See Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:LXXX-LXXXIII; Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 12 (dates it before 120); Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 2 vols. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003; repr., Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 1:140. An argument was based on the papyrus fragment P<sup>52</sup> (dated to the first half of the second century by Colin H. Roberts, ed., *An Unpublished Fragment of the Fourth Gospel in the John Rylands Library* [Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1935], 16), and P.Egerton 2 (dated around 200 CE). The dating of P<sup>52</sup> was challenged by some; see e.g. Brent Nongbri, "The Use and Abuse of P<sup>52</sup>: Papyrological Pitfalls in the Dating of the Fourth Gospel," *HTR* 98 (2005): 23-48. Nevertheless, Roberts' dating

Ephesus is favoured due to the observation of Irenaeus (*Haer.* 3.1.1) and Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 3.23.1-4), as well as the reference to the tension with the disciples of John the Baptist who only baptized in Ephesus outside Palestine (Acts 19:1-7).<sup>22</sup> Alexandria is also mentioned as a possible place;<sup>23</sup> some also accept Syria,<sup>24</sup> and there are some that argue for different locations at certain stages of development.<sup>25</sup>

Comparing the view of Wis and John that relates to its Jewish roots but the frame of reference is Jesus provides an insight to the relationship of Judaism and early Christianity. They arose from different, although similar and related, culture and circumstances.<sup>26</sup> It takes us on an exciting journey in which we can explore and examine the ways these two texts talk about immortality and eternal life.

## 1.1 Research Topic and Aim

My aim is to compare a particular aspect, namely, immortality/eternal life, between Wis and John. The affinities between the Fourth Gospel and wisdom literature were noted long ago by

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remains widely accepted. On recent discussions on this issue and the method of restoring fragments, see the article of Thomas J. Kraus, "Reconstructing Fragmentary Manuscripts—Chances and Limitations," in *Early Christian Manuscripts: Examples of Applied Method and Approach*, ed. Thomas J. Kraus and Tobias Nicklas, TENTS 5 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 1-38.

<sup>22</sup> Jan G. van der Watt, *An Introduction to the Johannine Gospel and Letters*, TTCABS (London: T&T Clark, 124.

<sup>23</sup> See William H. Brownlee, "Whence the Gospel according to John?," in *John and Qumran*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (London: Chapman, 1972), 166–194.

<sup>24</sup> R. Alan Culpepper, *The Gospel and Letters of John*, IBT (Nashville: Abingdon, 1998), 55-61; Helmut Koester, *History and Literature of Early Christianity* (vol. 2 of *Introduction to the New Testament*; 2nd ed.; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000), 182-183.

<sup>25</sup> See Raymond E. Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple* (New York: Paulist, 1979); Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 54-61. See arguments in van der Watt, *Introduction*, 124-126, and a more detailed discussion in Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:142-149.

<sup>26</sup> This implies Jewish-Hellenistic milieu and thought. Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem*, 261: "Hellenistic culture was not optional for the authors of these texts [Diaspora Jews]. It was the sea in which they swam and was an integral part of their identity." Nevertheless, Wis exhibits Jewish way of thinking in many instances; see, among others, Chrysostome Larcher, *Études sur le Livre de la Sagesse, EBib* (Paris: Gabalda, 1969), 277; Paul Beauchamp, "Le salut corporel des justes et la conclusion du livre de la Sagesse," *Bib* 45 (1964): 491-526; Wright, *The Resurrection*, 162-175; Émile Puech, "The Book of Wisdom and the Dead Sea Scrolls: An Overview," in Passaro and Bellia, *The Book of Wisdom in Modern Research*, 127-138. For John, see Anderson, *Riddles*, 187-190, who concludes that "John may have been finalized in a Hellenistic setting, but its thought-world is thoroughly Jewish in its origin" (187).

scholars.<sup>27</sup> Many of these scholars did have a closer look at the relationship between John and different pieces of wisdom literature.<sup>28</sup> The following study intends to continue along this line by looking at the particular link between Wis and John, and, by this, hoping to add to our knowledge and cognition of the Fourth Gospel's cultural and conceptual background, as well as add new insights to the conception of eternal life within these documents.

It is my concern to focus on the special aspects of the concepts of immortality/eternal life present in Wis and John. I envisage the research to lead us to a deeper understanding of the nature of the relationship between Wis and John since it centres on the use of one concept, eternal life, as it is embedded in the message and the theology of these documents. It should be noted that the theology of the texts in general is not the focus of this research. On the other hand, the concept of eternal life is related to many other concepts, such as the doctrine of God, human life, death; these aspects will receive due attention, thus, giving the necessary depth to my analysis.

I can summarize my aim in the following research questions:

- Are there significant similarities between the concepts of eternal life in Wis and John?
- If so, in what exactly do these similarities consist in?
- Are there any notable differences?

The answer to these questions will also reflect on the following issues:

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<sup>27</sup> Charles Foster Kent, *The Wise Men of Ancient Israel and Their Proverbs* (New York: Silver, Burdett, 1895)—Jesus' and the NT's use of the Book of Proverbs; Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, liii-lvi; Rendel Harris, *The Origin of the Prologue to St John's Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1917); B. P. W. Stather Hunt, *Primitive Gospel Sources* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1951), 311-317; Georg Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," *Bib* 38 (1957): 396-418; 39 (1958): 37-60; Henry R. Moeller, "Wisdom Motifs and John's Gospel," *BETS* 6 (1963): 92-100; Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:CXXII-CXXVII; Charles Harold Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953; repr., 1968); Douglas K. Clark, "Signs in Wisdom and John," *CBQ* 45 (1983): 201-209; Ben Witherington, *Jesus the Sage: The Pilgrimage of Wisdom* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1994), esp. 330-387; Ben Witherington, *John's Wisdom: A Commentary on the Fourth Gospel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995), Martin Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, JSNTSup 71 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992); Paul Heinisch, *Theology of the Old Testament*, trans. William G. Heidt (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1950), 113.

<sup>28</sup> See for example, Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 396-417, 37-60; Moeller, "Wisdom Motifs," 92-100; Clark, "Signs in Wisdom and John," 201-209; Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*; Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*.

- What do these similarities and differences tell us about the relation between these two texts?
- What do these similarities tell us about the possible cultural and conceptual background of the texts?

## 1.2 Theoretical Framework

### 1.2.1 Developing the Framework for Interpretation

In the texts of Wis and John there are different terms related to immortality and eternity: Wis uses ἀφθαρσία (2:23; 6:18, 19) and ἄφθαρτος (12:1; 18:4), ἀθανασία (3:4; 4:1; 8:13, 17; 15:3) and ἀθάνατος (1:15), εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα (5:15; 6:21; 12:10; 14:13), εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας (3:8), ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι (4:2) and αἰώνιος (8:13; 10:14; 17:2), ἀϊδιότης (2:23) and ἀίδιος (7:26). John uses εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα (4:14; 6:51, 58; 8:51, 52; 10:28; 11:26; 12:34; 13:8; 14:16), ζωὴ αἰώνιος (3:15, 16, 36a; 4:14, 36; 5:24a, 39; 6:27, 40, 47, 54, 68; 10:28; 12:25, 50; 17:2, 3) and 19 times only ζωή.<sup>29</sup>

These terms have been used in various senses in the OT and the NT. Αἰών denotes a *long period of time* or *duration of time*, a *life-span* of individuals or generations. Whenever they refer to past, ἀπ' αἰῶνος, πρὸ αἰῶνος, ἐκ τοῦ αἰῶνος can define *a remote past, from the beginning, from of old, earliest times*. When they refer to future, they denote *the age to come, always, forever, eternity*.<sup>30</sup> The accusative of time εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα and the strengthened form εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος, especially when it is in plural (εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων), emphasizes extension in time, displaying a strong tendency towards an absolute concept of eternity.<sup>31</sup> Αἰώνιος, the adjective derived from αἰών, also has multiple senses: it refers to a long period of time, *long ago, before time began, without beginning*; a period of unending duration, *without end, everlasting, for all time*; a period of time without beginning or end, *eternal*.<sup>32</sup> At a first glance, since the dictionaries

<sup>29</sup> See the discussion on these terms later.

<sup>30</sup> See "αἰών," BDAG, ad loc.; "αἰών," ANLEX, ad loc.; "αἰών," LS, ad loc.; "αἰών," GRK, ad loc.; H. Sasse, "αἰών, αἰώνιος," TDNT, 31-32; J. Guhrt, "αἰών," NIDNTT 3:826-833. For a more detailed treatment of the subject, see Ilaria Ramelli and David Konstan, *Terms for Eternity: Aionios and Aidios in Classical and Christian Texts* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2007), 5-70.

<sup>31</sup> Guhrt, NIDNTT 3:830; "αἰών," UBS, ad loc.; "αἰών," GRK, ad loc.; Sasse, TDNT, 31.

<sup>32</sup> "αἰώνιος," BDAG, ad loc. See also "αἰώνιος," UBS, ad loc.; "αἰώνιος," L&N, ad loc.; "αἰώνιος," ANLEX, ad loc.; "αἰώνιος," GRK, ad loc.



provide us with less varied explanation, ἀφθαρσία, ἀθανασία and αἰδιότης seems to be simpler. Ἀφθαρσία refers to “the state of not being subject to decay” that is *immortality* or *incorruptibility*.<sup>33</sup> The adjective ἄφθαρτος is used for *immortal, incorruptible, imperishable*.<sup>34</sup> Similarly, ἀθανασία can also refer to “immortality, endless existence, opposite τὸ θνητόν”<sup>35</sup> that is “the state of not being subject to death.”<sup>36</sup> In 1 Tim 6:15 it refers to God, the King of kings. The adjective ἀθάνατος is used for *deathless, undying, immortal*.<sup>37</sup> Αἰδιότης and αἰδιος refers to *everlasting, always existing, eternal*,<sup>38</sup> “pertaining to an unlimited duration of time.”<sup>39</sup> Now the question is: what do these terms refer to in Wis and John? Looking at the lexicographic meaning of the terms, we can see a wide potential; the concepts immortality and eternity have multiple senses. As Ramelli and Konstan summarize it, we find the sense that implies the duration of a limited time, of an indefinitely prolonged time that may have a beginning but no end (or no beginning but an end), or a strictly unlimited time with no beginning and no end but extending “infinitely into the past and future.”<sup>40</sup> Finally, eternity can perceive “‘timelessness,’ a changeless state that has no duration and hence is not subject to time at all.”<sup>41</sup>

What is the exact meaning conveyed by these terms in Wis and John? Analysing the terms themselves would not be enough to produce a credible account of the concept of immortality and eternity. Obviously, we have to take into account the context of the terms and see how the context shapes their meaning. And yet, this is not enough. Language is the expression of one’s conceptual system.<sup>42</sup> This implies two things: terminology expresses meaning, but meaning is

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<sup>33</sup> “ἀφθαρσία,” *BDAG*, ad loc.

<sup>34</sup> “ἄφθαρτος,” *ANLEX*, ad loc.; “ἄφθαρτος,” *BDAG*, ad loc.

<sup>35</sup> “ἀθανασία,” *ANLEX*, ad loc.

<sup>36</sup> “ἀθανασία,” *L&N*, ad loc.

<sup>37</sup> “ἀθάνατος,” *ANLEX*, ad loc.; “ἀθάνατος,” *LS*, ad loc.; “ἀθάνατος,” *BDAG*, ad loc.

<sup>38</sup> “αἰδιότης,” *LS*, ad loc.; “αἰδιος,” *ANLEX*, ad loc.; “αἰδιος,” *GRK*, ad loc.; αἰδιος,” *BDAG*, ad loc.

<sup>39</sup> “αἰδιος,” *L&N*, ad loc.

<sup>40</sup> Ramelli and Konstan, *Terms for Eternity*, 1-2.

<sup>41</sup> Ramelli and Konstan, *Terms for Eternity*, 2. For the latter sense of *eternity*, see more in Ramelli and Konstan, *Terms for Eternity*, 13-14, on Plato.

<sup>42</sup> George Lakoff, “The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor,” ed. Andrew Ortony, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 203-204. Zoltán Kövecses, *Language, Mind, and Culture: A Practical Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 122: “Linguistic metaphors (i.e., metaphors in language) are expressions of metaphorical concepts in the brain’s conceptual system. So, on the one hand, metaphorical linguistic expressions make conceptual metaphors manifest, and on the other, we can use these

not restricted to terminology. The meaning of *immortality* and *eternity* in Wis and John, therefore, does not only lie in the technical terms, but in the way the authors of these texts understood and expressed these concepts. We have to understand the way they thought of the world, creation and life, God and human beings. We also have to understand how they related these concepts and how immortality fits in all these; structure is as much part of the meaning as is the context. Meaning, therefore, functions within the worldview of the texts, and how these concepts fit the author's argument and theology. We have to note here that a concept may be present without a specific term being used; for instance, we will see the concepts of immortality and eternal life implied in the sections that speak of the righteous' being with God or remaining in the love of God.

To this end, approaching the theme from a conceptual perspective, I look at the concepts, themes, and worldview related to immortality and eternity in Wis and John rather than simply analysing the terminology. What I understand by *text* here, therefore, is not only words that constitute the text, but also the accompanying concepts and worldview. The textual elements that I compare are the themes, concepts, structure and worldview in Wis and John, obviously related to my specific theme. Consequently, in order to have a proper tool for my exegesis, I have to talk about the effect of concepts, patterns of thought and worldview instead of verbal parallels alone.

### 1.2.2 Criterial considerations

The questions listed below are usually considered when discussing the relation between two texts:

Does the historical-cultural background explain the similarities or does it allow for the relation between the two texts?<sup>43</sup>

Is there any similarity in form, similar or identical terms?

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metaphorical expressions to arrive at metaphors in thought by means of hypothetically assuming links between two domains."

<sup>43</sup> Andrew C. Brunson, *Psalm 118 in the Gospel of John: An Intertextual Study on the New Exodus Pattern in the Theology of John*, WUNT 2/158 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 14 n. 66: "if it can be demonstrated that the intended audience could also be expected to have knowledge of the text this increases the plausibility of citation." Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 30, also adds "historical plausibility," while warning that one should always be aware that an author (in his case, Paul) "might have written things that were not readily intelligible to his actual readers."

Are there similar concepts?

Can we find structural correspondence, similar contexts and circumstances?<sup>44</sup> (I.e. water—Wis uses it in the context of Exodus; John uses it in the context of the well of Jacob. However, John also refers to water in the context of the Feast of Tabernacles.)

Is there a thematic parallel?

To what extent the thematic or verbal parallel fits the author's argument?<sup>45</sup> Do the similarities fit the theology of the texts?

Is there a similar worldview?

Finally, in the process of comparing the texts, differences are as important as the similarities since we can see how the texts, in our case John, evolved from a certain tradition.<sup>46</sup>

### 1.3 History of Research

The question of the Fourth Gospel's relation to the sapiential material, even to Wis specifically, was raised by scholars long ago.<sup>47</sup> The issue still grasps the interest of modern scholarship; many scholars acknowledge the importance of and deal with the sapiential background of the Fourth Gospel.<sup>48</sup> They discuss the parallels between wisdom literature and John in the followings: the

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<sup>44</sup> Brunson, *Psalm 118 in the Gospel of John*, 15.

<sup>45</sup> Michael B. Thompson, *Clothed with Christ: The Example and Teaching of Jesus in Romans 12:1-15:13*, JSNTSup 59 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 32, calls this "conceptual agreement." He also notes that "it would be possible for an author deliberately to use the same language in a different sense" (*Clothed with Christ*, 32).

<sup>46</sup> Brunson, *Psalm 118 in the Gospel of John*, 11, notes: "Discontinuity between texts, however, can be as important as continuity for interpreting the allusion's meaning effect in the passage."

<sup>47</sup> See among the earliest Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, liii-lvi; Harris, *The Origin of the Prologue*; Hunt, *Primitive Gospel Sources*, 311-317.

<sup>48</sup> See among others Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 396-417, 37-60; Moeller, "Wisdom Motifs," 92-100; Clark, "Signs in Wisdom and John," 201-209; Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*; Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*; Sharon H. Ringe, *Wisdom's Friends: Community and Christology in the Fourth Gospel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1999); Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:CXXII-CXXVII; Brown, *Introduction*; Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, trans. Kevin Smyth, 3 vols., HTC (New York: Herder & Herder; Burns & Oates: London, 1968-1982), 1:121-124; James D. G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation* (London: SCM, 1980); Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*; Catherine Cory, "Wisdom's Rescue: A New Reading of the Tabernacles Discourse (John 7:1-8:59)," *JBL* 116 (1997): 95-116; Urban C. von Wahlde, "He Has Given to the Son to Have Life in Himself (John 5, 26)," *Bib* 85 (2004): 409-412; Mary L. Coloe, *Dwelling in the Household of God: Johannine Ecclesiology and Spirituality* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2007), 72-103; Cornelis Bennema, *The Power of Saving Wisdom: An Investigation of Spirit and Wisdom in Relation to the Soteriology of the Fourth Gospel*, WUNT 2/148 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002).

contrasting realities of God—human beings—devil,<sup>49</sup> Jesus as wisdom, the nature, role and function of wisdom and the Johannine Logos,<sup>50</sup> the sapiential background of the Prologue,<sup>51</sup> the relationship between wisdom/Logos and God, as well as the transforming relationship between wisdom/Logos and humankind,<sup>52</sup> salvation and eternal life,<sup>53</sup> the journey of wisdom/Logos from above to below,<sup>54</sup> literary structure (e.g. the Exodus miracles<sup>55</sup>) or language,<sup>56</sup> the parallels of the “I am sayings” in wisdom literature;<sup>57</sup> the conception of the signs in John against the sapiential background,<sup>58</sup> and other cosmological, Christological, soteriological and pneumatological parallels between wisdom literature and John that I do not mention here but discuss at the comparison between Wis and John.

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<sup>49</sup> Coloe, *Dwelling in the Household of God*, 72-103; Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*; Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*; Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*.

<sup>50</sup> Marie-Émile Boismard, *St. John's Prologue*, trans. Carisbrooke Dominicans (London: Blackfriars, 1957); Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 37-60; Richard J. Dillon, "Wisdom Tradition and Sacramental Retrospect in the Cana Account (Jn 2, 1-11)," *CBQ* 24 (1962): 268-296; Moeller, "Wisdom Motifs," 93-97; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:CXXII-CXXVII; Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*; John Ashton, "The Transformation of Wisdom: A Study of the Prologue of John's Gospel," *NTS* 32 (1986): 161-186. Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*; Ringe, *Wisdom's Friends*; Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*; Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*; Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, liii-lvi; François-Marie Braun, "Saint Jean, la sagesse et l'histoire," in *Neotestamentica et patristica: eine Freundesgabe Herrn Professor Oscar Cullmann zu seinem 60. Geburtstag überreicht*, ed. W. C. van Uhnik et al., NovTSup 6 (Leiden; Brill, 1962), 123-133; Andrew T. Glicksman, "Beyond Sophia: The Sapiential Portrayal of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel and Its Ethical Implications for the Johannine Community," in *Rethinking the Ethics of John: "Implicit Ethics" in the Johannine Writings*, ed. Jan G. van der Watt and Ruben Zimmermann, vol. 3 of *Kontexte und Normen neutestamentlicher Ethik = Contexts and Norms of New Testament Ethics*, WUNT 291 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 83-101; Robert Kysar, *The Fourth Evangelist and His Gospel: An Examination of Contemporary Scholarship* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1975), 107-114.

<sup>51</sup> Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*; Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*; Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, liii-liv; Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*; Harris, *The Origin of the Prologue*; Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:352-354.

<sup>52</sup> Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:CXXII-CXXVII; Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*; Ringe, *Wisdom's Friends*; Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*; Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*.

<sup>53</sup> Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, liii-lvi; Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 396-417, 37-60; Coloe, *Dwelling in the Household of God*, 72-103; Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*; Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*; Roland E. Murphy, "'To Know Your Might is the Root of Immortality' (Wis 15, 3)," *CBQ* 25 (1963): 88-93; Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*; Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*. Moeller, "Wisdom Motifs," 94-95; Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*; Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*.

<sup>55</sup> Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 403-406, and Clark, "Signs in Wisdom and John," 202-209, say that the list of signs in John follows the sequence of signs in Wis—although this is arguable according to Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 376 n. 122.

<sup>56</sup> Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 106, 372, 378-379: in the Father-teacher language John resembles Wis.

<sup>57</sup> Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*; Ringe, *Wisdom's Friends*; Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*.

<sup>58</sup> Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 396-418, 37-60; Clark, "Signs in Wisdom and John," 201-209; Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*; Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*.

Beside the conceptual affinities, some scholars also observed the similarities in language and stylistic elements.<sup>59</sup> Perhaps the most important of the similarities are those where the Gospel does not only use similar stylistic devices but uses them in a similar context and with a similar meaning. This can very well be seen if we compare Wis' account of God's gifts during the Exodus, manna, water and the salvation by the serpent (11:4; 16:6, 20-26), with similar account of these gifts in John (3:14-15; 4:14; 6:27, 35). In both texts the context—though the narrative may be different—is God's gift through wisdom and Jesus, and in both texts the gifts get eschatological connotation, associated with immortality and eternal life.<sup>60</sup> John's viewing the cross as the "symbol of salvation" (3:14)<sup>61</sup> is another exciting parallel that points towards Wis.

From the researches carried out, it becomes clear that scholars do not only acknowledge the sapiential links to John, but they also take its influence on the Gospel seriously. As Witherington concludes: "The point to be made here is that the Gospel of John makes a great deal more sense when read in light of the sapiential literature, and in view of the numerous similarities it has with it, it is hard to doubt that the evangelist intended it to be read that way."<sup>62</sup>

The scholars noticed wisdom motifs not only in John but in the Synoptics as well; Jesus appears as a wisdom teacher in both.<sup>63</sup> Brown, therefore, concludes that the sapiential influence in the Synoptics, though "is not overwhelming, but there is enough of it to make one suspect that the identification of Jesus with personified Wisdom was not the original creation of the Fourth Gospel. Probably here . . . John has capitalized on and developed a theme that was already in the primitive tradition."<sup>64</sup> Witherington also notes Matthew's extensive use of wisdom literature to

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<sup>59</sup> See Thomas Popp, "Die Kunst der Wiederholung: Repetition, Variation und Amplifikation im vierten Evangelium am Beispiel von Johannes 6, 60-71," in *Kontexte des Johannesevangeliums: Das vierte Evangelium in religions- und traditions-geschichtlicher Perspektive*, ed. Jörg Frey and Udo Schnelle, WUNT 175 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 559-592; Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*; Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*; Coloe, *Dwelling in the Household of God*, 72-103; Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*. Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 58-59, also mentions that Wis and John use similar method of interpretation: from earthly things they conclude for spiritual meaning.

<sup>60</sup> See Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 47-48, 405.

<sup>61</sup> For this see the last chapter.

<sup>62</sup> Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 378.

<sup>63</sup> Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:CXXIV-CXXV; Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 335-380.

<sup>64</sup> Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:CXXV.

conceive a wisdom-teaching Jesus.<sup>65</sup> The presence of sapiential influence in John and the Synoptics lead to the assumption of a common wisdom source behind the Synoptics and John.

Witherington<sup>66</sup> refers to Georgi who argues that the background of both Paul and his opponents in the 2 Corinthians was a “new world culture [that] was a creative and colourful pluralism, and Judaism was part of and contributor to it.”<sup>67</sup> “Jewish Apologists took the practical consequences of the universal aspects of Jewish wisdom. . . . [They] had made the same turn toward the dialectic between universality and particularity as the Hellenistic culture around them had.”<sup>68</sup> The combination between Judaism and Hellenism was made by Sirach, Wis and Philo. Jewish-Hellenistic wisdom must have served as a common source for Jewish and Christian authors as well that particularized the universal aspects of it according to their purposes.<sup>69</sup> The differences between the Synoptics and John then could be accounted for their particular use of the universal aspects of wisdom ideas to shape their material.<sup>70</sup>

From this conclusion another question arises: what was the purpose of John in presenting Jesus this way? Brown argues:

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<sup>65</sup> Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 335-367.

<sup>66</sup> Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 381-382.

<sup>67</sup> Dieter Georgi, *The Opponents of Paul in Second Corinthians* (trans. H. Attridge et al.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986; repr., SNTW; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1987), 400. Note that the Epilogue was added to the English edition.

<sup>68</sup> Georgi, *The Opponents of Paul*, 400.

<sup>69</sup> See the Epilogue of Georgi, *The Opponents of Paul*. Note that Georgi, *The Opponents of Paul*, 345, makes the observation that these are categories of modern times: “Barriers between phenomena like the Greek-speaking world and Judaism, ‘Christianity’ and paganism, orthodoxy and heresy, religious and secular, appear now as secondary artificial constructs of later generations.”

<sup>70</sup> As Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 379-380, notes, the two gospels differ in the way they present Jesus; the root of this difference lies in their particular use of wisdom literature. Earlier Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:CXXIV, came to a similar conclusion, and raises the question: “Is the presentation of Jesus as divine Wisdom a peculiarly Johannine development, or can it be traced back into the early tradition of the other Gospels? Some information pertinent to this understanding of Jesus may be found in all the Gospels.” Brown then concludes (*The Gospel according to John*, 1:CXXV) that although the Synoptics also display a sapiential character, John develops it in a different way: “In the Synoptics, Jesus’ teaching shows a certain continuity with the ethical and moral teachings of the sages of the Wisdom Literature; in John, Jesus is personified Wisdom.” Thus, John used the wisdom material to present a Jesus that is not only a wisdom teacher, but the incarnate wisdom. He does not take over the wisdom sayings and then makes Jesus speak them; rather he takes over the inherent characteristics and functions of wisdom (e.g. coming and going back to God, unique relationship with God, abiding with God and the believers) and makes them be part of what Jesus is, or in other words, Jesus has the nature and characteristics of wisdom interiorized to an extent that he becomes the incarnate wisdom.

In drawing this portrait of Jesus, the evangelist has capitalized on an identification of Jesus with personified divine Wisdom as described in the OT. . . . Just as the NT writers found in Jesus the antitype of elements in the historical books of the OT (e.g., of the Exodus, Moses, David) and the fulfilment of the words of the prophets, so the fourth evangelist saw in Jesus the culmination of a tradition that runs through the Wisdom Literature of the OT.<sup>71</sup>

The question that comes to mind now would be: where can Wis be placed in this dynamic relationship between wisdom tradition and John? As it was observed by Georgi, both Jewish and Christian writers were drawing on wisdom. Accordingly, Wis and John drew on a common material. The presence of common late wisdom material behind Wis and John was already pronounced by Ziener.<sup>72</sup> Witherington, Ziener and Brown also note instances in John that is characteristic of Wis.

The Fourth Gospel speaks of salvation in a way (usually as life or eternal life) and to a degree that is not characteristic of the Synoptics, but it is certainly reminiscent of the Wisdom of Solomon, where not only is immortality the reward for seeking and finding or receiving Wisdom, but it is also said “Who has learned your counsel unless you have given Wisdom and sent your holy Spirit from on high? And thus the paths of those on earth were set right, and people were taught what pleases you, and were saved by Wisdom” (Wis.

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<sup>71</sup> Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:CXXII. See also Maarten J. J. Menken, “Observations on the Significance of the Old Testament in the Fourth Gospel,” in *Theology and Christology in the Fourth Gospel: Essays by the Members of the SNTS Johannine Writings Seminar*, ed. Gilbert Van Belle, Jan G. van der Watt and P. J. Maritz, BETL 184 (Leuven: University Press; Leuven: Peeters, 2005), 155-175. Witherington, *John’s Wisdom*: “The point of this portrayal of Jesus as Wisdom is then at least in part to suggest that what one might look for in Judaism, including in Torah/wisdom, one can find in Jesus, and in the finding discover that he surpasses claims about other sources or sorts of wisdom.” Norman R. Petersen’s thesis is that the Johannine community that found itself in a conflict situation answered this situation by creating a special language—similar in terms to the everyday language but different in meaning—and a new identity. The key of this new identity involves that they are the “sons of Light,” the followers of Jesus (in opposition to the disciples of Moses) who is greater than both Law and wisdom. See Petersen, *The Gospel of John and the Sociology of Light: Language and Characterization in the Fourth Gospel* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press, 1993; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2008).

<sup>72</sup> Ziener, “Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium,” 59-60: “the substantive [inhaltlichen] similarities between two documents cannot be explained solely by the mutual dependence on the older canonical wisdom literature, as shown in the parallels (for example, in the accounts of miracles) that are not found in the older wisdom literature. It is, therefore, assumed that the author of the Book of Wisdom proceeds in his work of a late Jewish wisdom tradition, which has in turn influenced the Gospel of John. This hypothesis would explain both the substantive correspondences as well as the absence of any verbal agreement” [own trans.].

9:17-18). It is striking too that John's theology of the penetration of believers by Christ, so that he will dwell in them (14:23) seems to echo the idea found in Wis. 7:24, 27 that salvation amounts to Wisdom penetrating and indwelling human beings.<sup>73</sup>

But although Witherington is inclined towards seeing a closer link between Wis and John, he rather ascribes the similarities to the common background.<sup>74</sup>

There are points where these discussions seem to be limited. Firstly, most of the scholars consider the relationship between the Fourth Gospel and wisdom literature as such without reflecting in depth to particular pieces of literature. Among the scholars, however, there are some, like Witherington, Ziener that acknowledge the priority of Wis along with Sirach. In Witherington's words, "this Gospel reflects a notable similarity to late Wisdom material, especially the Wisdom of Solomon."<sup>75</sup> The article of Ziener considers the relationship between Wis and John.<sup>76</sup> I also follow this line that is focusing on one text in relation to John, and one central theme. The advantage of comparing John with several wisdom texts is that it presents a wider picture of John's background; however, it lacks depth given that it cannot present a detailed picture of the parallels. This study, therefore, focuses on one text, Wis, to give a better account of John's indebtedness with wisdom concepts.

Secondly, most of the studies embrace and discuss several texts, themes, paralleling ideas or motifs. The parallels listed by scholars, although, let us perceive the extent of the sapiential influence on John, do not exhaust the similarities. This is due to the general discussion of the parallels between wisdom and John that lacks the analysis of particular concepts like eternity.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 378. Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 59, argues: "In summary it can be said that within the Gospel of John, especially Christology, eschatology, the conception of 'life' and the miracle reports have points of contact with the Book of Wisdom. But these are precisely those subjects in which the autonomy of John's Gospel in relation to the Synoptics is expressed most clearly" [own trans.].

<sup>74</sup> Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 378: John draws on Wis, or rather on a common background.

<sup>75</sup> Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 379.

<sup>76</sup> Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 396-418, 37-60.

<sup>77</sup> Although salvation is referred to in Ziener, Witherington, Brown, Dodd, etc., who show the relation of the concept with the signs of Exodus/of Jesus, with wisdom/Jesus, the concept of abiding, and even with *knowledge*, the concept of life is not analysed in full, i.e. in itself, in relation to the other concepts, and in relation to the text as a whole. The scholarly focus is rather on Jesus's figure as wisdom. Witherington in his



The following study, therefore, is not generic, but specific: I focus on particular concepts, eternity and immortality, which, I believe, will give depth to the discussion and may lead us to a better understanding of the relation between John and wisdom concepts. This theme, of course, has many aspects and it relates to several other concepts such as earthly life, death, evil, etc.; these will also be discussed inasmuch as is needed for our understanding of eternity and immortality. It is my conviction that the thoughts and view of the Gospel author on eternal life present parallels that add to our understanding of John's relationship with Wis as well. It is not only the figure of Jesus, his presence with God and presence with human beings, the metaphors related to him, etc. that parallels Wis, but we find striking similarities in the way they think about eternal life,<sup>78</sup> they conceive of and structure this concept, they relate this concept to other concepts, and finally, the way they contrast this concept with death. I pick up the conclusion of the authors about Jesus as the incarnate wisdom, and explain the concept of life, too, against this. The process of interiorizing wisdom extends to the concepts related to salvation as well which makes the theology of the Gospel unique. Jesus' main task is salvation in John, and if Jesus is presented as wisdom and he functions like wisdom, the life he delivers has to be similar in concept to the life delivered by wisdom.

## 1.4 Moving to a Hypothesis

Although more and more scholars acknowledge that John draws on Jewish-Hellenistic wisdom material, they are very cautious with regard its link with Wis. As we have seen in the previous section, scholars would rather consider the similarities as deriving from the common background than acknowledging certain knowledge of Wis by John.

Theoretically, there are different possibilities to interpret the relationship between John and Wis, which should be kept in mind. One possibility is that Wis and John drew on a common

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massive discussion focuses on the agent of salvation and not on salvation. Similarly, Brown, Moeller, etc., who discuss the parallels between wisdom literature and John in length, focus on the figure of Jesus. Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 396-418, 37-60, addresses the theme of salvation, faith, knowledge, life, although his article is not a complex analysis of the theme.

<sup>78</sup> Wis utters a more clear and positive belief in afterlife in claiming that the righteous will live forever (5:15) than Sirach or Proverbs; see Collins, "The Root of Immortality," 360-367. Cf. Maurice Gilbert, "Wisdom Literature," in *JWSTP*, ed. Michael E. Stone, CRINT 2 (Assen: Van Gorcum; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 283-324.

conceptual background that is their thoughts and cognition were shaped by their being part of the same cultural and conceptual context. As a consequence of this, their worldview, ideas, motifs and concepts present similarities. This possibility seems favoured among the scholars.<sup>79</sup> The second possibility is that of allusion. Intertextual relationship in more recent works is defined as a dynamic relationship. Brunson observes that “citation brings prior and later texts into a mutually interpreting relationship: the former is transformed by the new context into which it has been introduced, at the same time changing the new context and generating new meaning.”<sup>80</sup> Hays notes that “when a literary echo links the text in which it occurs to an earlier text, the figurative effect of the echo can lie in the unstated or suppressed (transumed) points of resonance between two texts. . . . Allusive echo functions to suggest to the reader that text B should be understood in the light of a broad interplay with text A, encompassing aspects of A beyond those explicitly echoed.”<sup>81</sup> There are different ways by which the intertextual references are defined and classified; there is an on-going scholarly dispute about this.<sup>82</sup> The most commonly used terms are *quotation* and *allusion* for more explicit references where probably authorial intention takes a role, and *echo* for less overt and supposedly non-deliberate references.

The volume of intertextual echo varies in accordance with the semantic distance between the source and the reflecting surface. Quotation, allusion, and echo may be seen as points along a spectrum of intertextual reference, moving from the explicit to the subliminal. As we move farther away from overt citation, the source recedes into the discursive distance, the intertextual relations become less determinate, and the demand placed on the reader’s listening powers grows greater. As we near the vanishing point of the echo, it inevitably

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<sup>79</sup> See Ziener, “Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium,” 59-60; Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 378.

<sup>80</sup> Brunson, *Psalm 118 in the Gospel of John*, 10. John Hollander, *The Figure of Echo: A Mode of Allusion in Milton and After* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), ix, already observed that “the revisionary power of allusive echo generates new figuration,” and he points out that “the rebounds of intertextual echo generally, then, distort the original voice in order to interpret it” (111).

<sup>81</sup> Hays, *Echoes*, 20. Hays draws on Hollander, *The Figure of Echo*.

<sup>82</sup> See the seven tests of Hays to discern allusions in Hays, *Echoes*, 29-32; see also Brunson, *Psalm 118 in the Gospel of John*, 14-16.

becomes difficult to decide whether we are really hearing an echo at all, or whether we are only conjuring things out of the murmurings of our own imaginations.<sup>83</sup>

Hays,<sup>84</sup> then, uses *allusion* for “obvious” references and *echo* for the “subtler ones,” while admitting the difficulty of classifying allusions. Brunson also notes that the line between these categories is “blurry.”<sup>85</sup> Paul proposes another classification where allusions are classified as “verbal allusion to words; verbal allusion to themes; thematic allusion to words; thematic allusion to themes.”<sup>86</sup>

There are two observations to be made here. Firstly, as the scholars as well as the textual analysis presented in the dissertation attest, the similarities between Wis and John mainly consist of similar concepts and not verbal correspondence, so I have to broaden my definition of text. Secondly, in developing the hypothesis I do not make any systematic distinction between *allusions* and *echoes* given that the original context of the reference has to be taken into account even in the case of the echoes,<sup>87</sup> and, as Paul says, “any test of interpretation must be against coherence with the text, not against an imputed authorial intention.”<sup>88</sup> I consider that in the process of creating new meaning echoes also have their share since even if the author alluded to part of the wisdom material consciously, there were probably instances that he drew on because they constituted his conceptual background.

In developing the hypothesis the following facts will be taken into consideration:

1. The similarity between John and the ideas incorporated in wisdom literature proves how much John is indebted to wisdom. This similarity was not just one granted by the historical-cultural milieu, but as some of the scholars acknowledge it,<sup>89</sup> it was also intended by John.<sup>90</sup> The

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<sup>83</sup> Hays, *Echoes*, 23.

<sup>84</sup> Hays, *Echoes*, 29.

<sup>85</sup> Brunson, *Psalms 118 in the Gospel of John*, 13.

<sup>86</sup> Ian Paul, “The Use of the Old Testament in Revelation 12,” in *The Old Testament in the New Testament: Essays in Honour of J. L. North*, ed. Steve Moyise, JSNTSup 189 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2000), 261.

<sup>87</sup> See Paul, “The Use of the Old Testament in Revelation 12,” 260.

<sup>88</sup> Paul, “The Use of the Old Testament in Revelation 12,” 260.

<sup>89</sup> See the scholarly opinion above.

<sup>90</sup> Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 379-380, referring to the differences between John and the Synoptics says: “The Fourth Evangelist has been deeply affected by the Wisdom corpus and draws on it in his presentation of

relationship between John and wisdom cannot, therefore, be seen only as an issue of the common background: the scholars mentioned above suggest that the author drew on wisdom.

2. The aforementioned argument does not itself prove a close relationship between Wis and John; as it was mentioned above, the scholars, even those that argue for a conscious use of wisdom tradition on the part of John, tend to consider the relationship between Wis and John as one defined by the common background. The small amount—if there is any—of verbal correspondences supports this view; there are only few correspondences in language that might support allusion.<sup>91</sup> Verbal parallels would increase “the likelihood of allusion”<sup>92</sup> or, at least, it would be easier to argue for it. Nevertheless, the fact that the Gospel bears similarity to Wis in ideas, theme and structures could be as important as verbal correspondence and they might suggest that John was aware of the ideas incorporated in Wis.<sup>93</sup> Observing such a consistent use of wisdom motifs, ideas and structures in John, and then ascribing the similarities between Wis and John only to the common background may be neither convincing nor pleasing. The correspondences appear on conceptual, thematic and structural level.<sup>94</sup> Brunson notes that the indicator can also be “a marker that in a relatively clear way, without verbal correspondence, points to a particular text.”<sup>95</sup> Thus, no direct citation or explicit verbal parallel is needed to recognize the influence of a prior text to a later. The importance of certain parallels in concepts and thought cannot be left unnoticed. The many conceptual, thematic and structural parallels between Wis and John at least show the intensity of the affinity between Wis and John.

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Jesus. . . . It is perhaps not too much to say that a primary cause of the major differences between the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptics is the *way* the evangelist draws on Wisdom material to shape the source material that he *does not* share with the Synoptics, and even some of the common material.”

<sup>91</sup> Ziener, “Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium,” 59, rejects a direct dependency between Wis and John on account of the lack of verbal correspondence and absence of philosophical terms in John.

<sup>92</sup> Brunson, *Psalms 118 in the Gospel of John*, 14.

<sup>93</sup> Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 168, claims the following, referring to the signs in John: “Since we have already seen numerous ways in which the Fourth Gospel’s Sophia Christology parallels the traditions of Wisdom of Solomon, this further connection seems to strengthen the claim that the Fourth Evangelist may well have known and used that book as part of her/his background material. Even if we allow that the Evangelist used an already existing source, it may very well either have been considerably reworked in the light of Sophia traditions contained in Wisdom of Solomon, or it may already have contained hints of that tradition.”

<sup>94</sup> From the parallels noted by us and other scholars, it is obvious that the similarities consist not in similar terms, but in similar concepts and corresponding use of these concepts.

<sup>95</sup> Brunson, *Psalms 118 in the Gospel of John*, 14.

3. To avoid any misunderstanding, I point out that my assumption of John's use of wisdom framework refers to the sapiential thought, ideas, concepts; I believe that John drew on wisdom concepts to develop his ideas about human beings, life and God. But my concern is to point out the depth of John's incorporation of wisdom by focusing on a single piece of wisdom literature, often neglected when discussing the sapiential influence on John, the Wisdom of Solomon. This pursuit, I believe, will take us to a deeper understanding of the Fourth Gospel's relationship with wisdom.

4. Further, I find that the question that feeds the root of this hypothesis about the relationship between Wis and John is not *what the relation between Wis and John consist in*, but rather, *why John relates to Wis*, or in other words, *what the relationship* (I do not refer to direct influence here but to the similarities) *between Wis and John adds to John*. This question, I assume, would anticipate a more accurate answer to the relationship between these two texts.

5. The ideas taken from wisdom literature are placed in the Gospel in a way that they fit its arguments and theology. The wisdom concepts are so imbedded in John that one can see a merging of ideas that produces a novel presentation of Jesus. The echoes to wisdom in John are the signs of this creative work; by *creative* I understand a conscious build-upon and merging of wisdom ideas to develop a higher level wisdom acceptable and understandable for the Jewish-Hellenistic audience. Focusing on one concept has the advantage of providing an in-depth study of how the ideas, motives, structures taken over from wisdom function in John and to what extent they are imbedded in John's theology.

The following hypothesis goes beyond the terms *allusion* or *echo*, while trying to define the roots of the affinities between Wis and John. It observes the special manner, extent and purpose of John's imbedding of the wisdom concepts. The evidence points to the possibility that John used wisdom concepts and insights in order to produce a new idea of life with God,<sup>96</sup> conceived in the light of Jesus and expressed in the narrative of Jesus as wisdom. He was part of that Jewish-

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<sup>96</sup> Of course, the idea of life with God is related to John's conception of God, world and human beings, in other words, it is part of his worldview.

Hellenistic cultural milieu where affinities with wisdom concepts were given and the contemporary audience familiar with, among others, Jewish wisdom would have easily understood his ideas. To this end, he recounted the tradition of Jesus and eternal life by using, inter alia, concepts familiar in wisdom. By this he pointed out that what Jesus brings them is as essential as wisdom was. In this argument, the similarities between Wis and John will be considered as yet another evidence of John's building on the concepts and worldview of sapiential thought. The affinities of John with Wis show how deeply John is related to wisdom, how the wisdom concepts of immortality found their ways to the worldview of Wis and that of John, and they may even suggest that beyond the common background John was, at least, familiar with the ideas incorporated in Wis.<sup>97</sup>

## 1.5 Method

As I have said, the hypothesis moves in the direction of strengthening the idea of John's creative use of wisdom framework by comparing its text with Wis. Accordingly, I shall limit my focus to the similarities (and differences) in Wis and John regarding the concepts of eternity and immortality as central concepts in the worldview of Wis and John, and I do not deal with their relations to other texts. The concepts of immortality and eternity are not only linked to other concepts, but they are understood and explained by way of other concepts. Immortality and eternity are part of the divine mystery; human mind can only understand and explain these concepts in terms of and in relation to other concepts rooted in the human world. Ziener observed that Wis and John both use the same method of interpretation: spiritual ideas are inferred from earthly concepts, e.g. wisdom and Jesus appear as the true light and food opposite to earthly light and food.<sup>98</sup> Going over Wis and John we can perceive similar ideas in thought structure. In both cases immortality and eternity is related to and defined by the concepts of presence with God, communion with God, being in the hand of God, protection, love, peace, knowledge, power and light.<sup>99</sup> We can observe how these concepts are sometimes viewed as

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<sup>97</sup> Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, liii: no direct quotation from Wis in the NT, but "there is little doubt that its influence was felt by some of the N.T. writers."

<sup>98</sup> Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 58-59.

<sup>99</sup> Jan G. van der Watt, "Reading New Testament Imagery," in *Focusing on the Message: New Testament Hermeneutics, Exegesis and Methods*, ed. Andrie du Toit, GNT (Pretoria: Protea Book House, 2009), 305: "Not

states, at other times as goals, or perceived as entities given as gift. I considered that using some of the insights of cognitive linguistics, more exactly, the conceptual metaphor theory of Lakoff and Johnson, together with the findings of Lakoff and Turner as well as Kövecses,<sup>100</sup> would be a great help in a better understanding of the concepts of immortality and eternity in these documents, i.e. in exploring their conceptual nature. We could identify the concepts that are used to conceive immortality and eternity and the aspects of immortality and eternity conceived by means of these concepts. Moreover, we can discover the elements of the domains used by different metaphors, the links between these elements, their coherence and function in that particular metaphor. Further, we are not only able to explore the metaphors that structure immortality and eternal life, we can also perceive what other metaphors are related to the metaphors that define immortality and eternal life, how they interact with and function with the metaphors of immortality and eternal life, and finally, how they help in our cognition. This allows us to understand the perception of these authors and their audience, and it also helps us to unearth the thought structure and worldview behind these concepts. Naturally, there could be alternative methods to explore the concepts and the similarities in concepts in Wis and John; however, I found the insights of cognitive linguistics most suitable for complementing the analysis and, thus serve a better understanding of the concepts of immortality and eternal life.

The classical repertoire of historical-critical method does not come into focus in this study since the research questions take us in other directions of analysis. Having said that, I do not deny the importance of historical approach, but I reflect to these issues socio-linguistically.<sup>101</sup> Since the correspondences seem to appear on conceptual level that would allow for conceptually linking

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only does figurative language give color to what we say, it also makes it possible to sense what cannot otherwise be seen.”

<sup>100</sup> For theoretical consideration on the nature of cognitive metaphors, see George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980); George Lakoff and Mark Turner, *More than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989); Lakoff, “The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor,” 202-251; Zoltán Kövecses, *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). As conceptual metaphors are well described in these works, it is not necessary to repeat everything here.

<sup>101</sup> The importance of the sociological context of the text was argued by Howard Clark Kee, *Christian Origins in Sociological Perspective: Methods and Resources* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1980); Gerd Theissen, *Studien zur Soziologie des Urchristentums*, WUNT 19 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1979); Wayne A. Meeks, ed., *Zur Soziologie des Urchristentums: Ausgewählte Beiträge zum frühchristlichen Gemeinschaftsleben in seiner gesellschaftlichen Umwelt*, trans. G. Memmert, TB 62 (Munich: Kaiser, 1979).

John with such wisdom material, I chose to rely mostly on literary analytical tools together with the insights taken from conceptual metaphorical studies as well as socio-cultural analysis. With this it has been taken into account that conceptual metaphors are social phenomena.<sup>102</sup>

My approach is thematic; I focus on the concepts of immortality and eternal life, and other related concepts. With regards to the methods, my analysis is problem-oriented. Since I concentrate on certain questions, I always use the method that I find more appropriate to understand the text. This, however, does not mean that these methods are not combined; furthermore, certain methods are given preference based on the issues met.

Thus, this research involves grammatical-semantic analysis,<sup>103</sup> also considering how the lexicographic meaning of the terms is actualized by the context that is what meaning is conveyed by the context (textual)—this analysis also embeds us into the socio-linguistic world of that time.<sup>104</sup> My research further progresses with literary analysis to establish the stylistic features of the relevant passages. The conceptual study is useful in observing how the meaning of terms related to immortality and eternal life—ἀφθαρσία, ἀθανασία, εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, αἰδιότης, etc. in Wis, and εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, ζωὴ αἰώνιος, ζωὴ in John—are defined and shaped by their context, what ideas are associated with them. To take this analysis further, I proceed to discover the metaphors that conceive the concepts of immortality/eternal life in Wis and John—NB: metaphors are viewed as socially related phenomena—, the inner structure within these metaphors, as well as the way they function in the context and theology of Wis and John. To this end, I use some important insights of cognitive metaphor theory that claims that metaphors are

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<sup>102</sup> Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 22: “The most fundamental values in a culture will be coherent with the metaphorical structure of the most fundamental concepts in the culture.” Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 22-24, also note that in each subculture there are certain priorities among the values and metaphors. The subculture defines which values and metaphors have priority over the others. This naturally organizes the whole system of values and metaphors. The subcultures can also give different definition to a certain value; however, the value system of the different subcultures is still coherent with the values of the mainstream culture.

<sup>103</sup> For the insights of modern syntax and semantics, see Herman du Toit, “Contributions from Modern Linguistics to New Testament Exegesis,” in du Toit, *Focusing on the Message*, 267-304.

<sup>104</sup> Andrie du Toit, “New Testament Exegesis in Theory and Practise,” in du Toit, *Focusing on the Message*, 114, notes the distinction between *intratextual* and *extratextual contexts*, with the former referring to “the picture of the real world created within the text” and the latter referring to “its real life counterpart.” For the socio-scientific criticism, see Andries van Aarde and Stephan Joubert, “Social-Scientific Criticism,” in du Toit, *Focusing on the Message*, 419-456.



central to our perception that is metaphors are essential for understanding our experiences of the world and of ourselves.<sup>105</sup> I need to mention that I do not intend to propose a (new) metaphor theory; I shall only use the insights of others.

I shall now proceed to describe briefly some aspects of conceptual metaphor theory. According to this theory, metaphor is a “cross-domain mapping” that is thinking of one concept in terms of another.<sup>106</sup> Conceptual metaphors consist of a target domain (a more abstract<sup>107</sup> or “less sharply delineated”<sup>108</sup> concept) that we understand in terms of a source domain (more concrete<sup>109</sup> or “sharply delineated”<sup>110</sup> concept that arises more directly from our experiences<sup>111</sup>).<sup>112</sup> That A is understood in terms of B means that “there is a set of systematic correspondences between the source and the target in the sense that constituent conceptual elements of B correspond to constituent elements of A. Technically, these conceptual correspondences are often referred to as mappings.”<sup>113</sup>

The metaphorical structuring affects not only the target domain, but the source domain as well. Black said that there is interaction between the elements of the metaphor.<sup>114</sup> He describes the interaction as the influence of the characteristics<sup>115</sup> of the different domains on each other, which

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<sup>105</sup> Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor: Multi-disciplinary Studies of the Creation of Meaning in Language*, transl. Robert Czerny, Kathleen McLaughlin and John Costello (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977; repr., London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), 22: “metaphor bears information because it ‘re-describes’ reality.”

<sup>106</sup> Lakoff, “The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor,” 203.

<sup>107</sup> Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 6.

<sup>108</sup> As Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 58, call it.

<sup>109</sup> Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 6.

<sup>110</sup> Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 57.

<sup>111</sup> Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 56-60, who, however, also note that even our physical experiences are culturally imbedded (57).

<sup>112</sup> Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 6: from this the principle of *unidirectionality* arises, that is “the metaphorical process typically goes from the more concrete to the more abstract but not the other way around.” It is possible that a certain source domain is seen as a target domain in another metaphor. But in this case, understood as source the domain is concrete, whereas understood as target the same domain is metaphorical. For this, see Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 58, 131-133.

<sup>113</sup> Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 6. Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 94, also explains that “metaphorical entailment” occurs when metaphors “map additional knowledge from the source onto the target.”

<sup>114</sup> Max Black, “Metaphor,” in *Models and Metaphors: Studies in Language and Philosophy*, ed. Max Black (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1962), 25-47, following I. A. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (London: Oxford University Press, 1936).

<sup>115</sup> Called by Black as the “system of associated commonplaces” (“Metaphor,” 40) or the “system of implications” (“Metaphor,” 41).

results in their new understanding. Thus, “the principal subject is ‘seen through’ the metaphorical expression” that is the metaphor “organizes our view” of it.<sup>116</sup> Lakoff and Turner criticize the Interaction Theory saying that contrary to its claim, it basically “assumes that . . . we are merely comparing the two domains in both directions and picking out the similarities.”<sup>117</sup> They note that the Interaction Theory allows for the bidirectional metaphorical process,<sup>118</sup> but according to them, meaning derives from “mapping” one domain into the other. Metaphorical structuring is always unidirectional; it is always the source that is mapped onto the target, and never vice versa.<sup>119</sup> Further, mapping involves not only comparing similarities. Taking the metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY as example, the metaphor comes into existence not by comparing the similarities of life domain and journey domain, but by mapping the structure of journey domain into the life domain; that is the “metaphor can provide structure and attributes not inherent in the target domain, as, for example, when dying is understood as departure to a final destination or death is understood as a reaper. The phenomenon of death is not objectively similar to a reaper.”<sup>120</sup> Fauconnier and Turner take this further when they speak about conceptual blending of metaphors, saying that in cases like *The Grim Reaper* several domains blend and the meaning arises from the interaction of all these domains; the metaphor may constitute elements that do not belong to either of the domains but reside in their blending.<sup>121</sup> “The Grim Reaper resides

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<sup>116</sup> Black, “Metaphor,” 41.

<sup>117</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 132.

<sup>118</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 132. Jacobus Liebenberg, *The Language of the Kingdom and Jesus: Parable, Aphorism, and Metaphor in the Sayings Material Common to the Synoptic Tradition and the Gospel of Thomas*, BZNW 102 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2001), 93, following Soskice and Searle, also criticizes Black’s theory, saying that it “lapses into a ‘comparison’ theory of metaphor, one which Black himself criticises. . . . Despite Black’s claims of interaction, it is not generally true of metaphors that there is an interaction between ‘vehicle’ and ‘tenor.’” Cf. Black, “Metaphor,” 35-37; Janet Marie Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), 43; John R. Searle, “Metaphor,” in *Philosophical Perspectives on Metaphor*, ed. Mark Johnson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981), 262-263. Nevertheless, *emphasizing* and *suppressing* involve that the two domains interact in a certain way, as we will see below.

<sup>119</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 131-133.

<sup>120</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 123; they say this about Similarity Position Theory, but since Black also focuses on similarities, it can be used as an argument against him.

<sup>121</sup> Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner, *The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending and the Mind’s Hidden Complexities* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 291-295, also 17-38, 39-57; Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 229-230.

conceptually in none of the other input spaces. It resides instead in a blend to which we project structure from all these spaces.”<sup>122</sup>

There is another principle implied in Lakoff’s theory. The theory of mapping involves that only those elements of the source are mapped that fit into the target domain, and the other elements are neglected. As a result mapping is always partial.<sup>123</sup> Black mentions that when the elements of the two domains are compared, changes occur in the two domains: the metaphor “suppresses” some characteristics and “emphasizes” others.<sup>124</sup> Similarly, Lakoff and Johnson speak of “highlighting” and “hiding” in the process of mapping, which results in focusing on one aspect of the concept and not focusing on other aspects “that are inconsistent with that metaphor.”<sup>125</sup> This also means that if we view both target and source domain from the angle of a certain aspect, their meaning is shaped in relation to the aspect we want to focus on.

Another feature of importance of the conceptual metaphors is that there can be several metaphors to express one concept; all these metaphors serve different purposes since they describe different aspects of the same concept. Thus, if we grasp an idea of immortality that is viewed as presence in the realm of God and another where immortal existence is perceived as ruling and judging over people, we should remember that these images are related to different aspects of the concept of immortality; thus they are not only coherent<sup>126</sup> but in certain cases they are interdependent. On the one hand, the metaphor of kingship is related to the communion with God since entering the sphere of God is requisite of the gifts of God. On the other hand, being in the sphere of God comes with the benefit of receiving power.

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<sup>122</sup> Fauconnier and Turner, *The Way We Think*, 291.

<sup>123</sup> Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 10.

<sup>124</sup> Black, “Metaphor,” 41; cf. Jan G. van der Watt, *Family of the King: Dynamics of Metaphor in the Gospel according to John*, BibInt 47 (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 17.

<sup>125</sup> Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 10. Lakoff, “The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor,” 215, calls this the “Invariance principle”: “Metaphorical mappings preserve the cognitive topology (that is, the image-schema structure) of the source domain, in a way consistent with the inherent structure of the target domain.” This means that the “source domain interiors,” for example, cannot be mapped onto the “target domain exteriors”; it also means that the elements that are not consistent with the target cannot be mapped (“The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor,” 216). See also Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 102-104.

<sup>126</sup> See Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 87-105, about the coherence of metaphors.

The insights of cognitive linguistics, thus, does not only help us perceive various aspects of the concepts of immortality and eternity, but also uncover the implied relations between the different metaphors that conceive immortality and eternity, as well as their intertwining with other related metaphors; moreover, they let us understand why the concepts of immortality and eternal life are structured in a similar way and why they differ in certain respects.

Since the material I analyse is big and I am dealing with several concepts related to eternity, I chose the method of analysing Wis and John separately, and point out the similarities only in the last chapter. Hereby, I have to mention that the emphasis is on Wis because much has been done on John. The first two chapters show that my assumption is based on the texts themselves and not on any externally imposed affinity.

## **1.6 Unfolding of Study**

Having discussed the theoretical framework, I proceed with the analysis of the texts. I discuss Wis and John separately, basically following the same procedure. The first part of the analysis in each case consists in looking at the cosmological dynamics in relation to the concept of immortality and eternal life. The issue on which it focuses is the cosmological framework of immortality and eternal life, observing where and with what implications these concepts are placed within the worldview of Wis and John. This section specifically deals with the conception of the cosmos, God, death, human beings, human life, and immortality/eternal life. The main question is how the elements of cosmos relate to each other in the comprehension of Wis and John and how this affects the perception of immortality and eternal life.

The next part of the analysis examines how the concepts of immortality and eternal life are structured by various metaphors, more exactly the conceptual domains used by the metaphors, the properties of these domains and how they are mapped, furthermore, I discuss the other related metaphors they blend with, the coherence and cohesion between them, and finally, how they are imbedded in the theology as a whole.

The final chapter deals with the comparison of the concepts of immortality and eternal life in Wis and John; it places the ideas of Wis and John next to each other and looks at the similarities in the conception of immortality/eternal life, in structure (thought pattern) and worldview

(whether the concepts of immortality/eternal life have the same place in the worldview and attached to similar values). I shall also look at the dissimilarities since they are important steps in the process, and also see to what extent John and Wis differs in the common elements.

## 2 Immortality in Wisdom Defined in Terms of Different Conceptual Metaphors

Looking at the verbal expressions, the concepts immortality, incorruption and eternity are expressed by different terms: ἀφθαρσία (2:23a; 6:18, 19), ἀθανασία (3:4; 4:1; 8:13, 17; 15:3), εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα (5:15; 6:21; 14:13), εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας (3:8), αἰών (4:2<sup>127</sup>), αἰώνιος (8:13; 10:14; 17:2), ἄφθαρτος (12:1; 18:4), ἀθάνατος (1:15), ἀϊδιότης (2:23), ἀΐδιος (7:26). Besides these terms<sup>128</sup> immortality is related to and defined by various concepts such as the different images of God and his realm, love, peace, power, kingship, knowledge, childhood and friendship with God. These concepts also underline the relational aspect of immortality; the relationship of man with God constitutes an elementary idea in the conception of immortality. Understanding immortality also requires looking at its opposing pole, death. We can also grasp the present-future dynamic implied in the concept, and the importance of man's attitude towards God, life and death. From all these it becomes clear that understanding immortality is not only a matter of terms, but of concepts and worldview as well.

Wis is divided into three parts: 1:1-6:21; 6:22-9:18; 10:1-19:21.<sup>129</sup> It is mainly the first part (chaps. 1-6) that deals with immortality. However, on account of the eschatological overtone of the first chapters, the rest of the book also gets eschatological connotation,<sup>130</sup> forming a history

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<sup>127</sup> 13:9; 14:6; 18:4 in the sense of "world"; see "αἰών," BDAG, ad loc.

<sup>128</sup> Though these terms have several features that will be discussed below, when we generalize, we use the term immortality to reflect on the state of the righteous man that is in relation to God.

<sup>129</sup> Although the question of division is not significant for our discussion, we note that there is a disagreement between scholars as to whether the third part of Wis starts at 10:1 or chap. 11. See, for instance, Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 9-12; James M. Reese, "Plan and Structure in the Book of Wisdom," *CBQ* 27 (1965): 391-399; Addison G. Wright, "The Structure of Wisdom 11-19," *CBQ* 27 (1965): 28-34; Maurice Gilbert, "The Literary Structure of the Book of Wisdom: A Study of Various Views," in Passaro and Bellia, *The Book of Wisdom in Modern Research*, 26-30; Popp, "Die Kunst der Wiederholung," 570. There is also disagreement as to whether the third section starts with 11:1 or 11:2; see Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 10-11; Wright, "Structure," 28-29. I shall note that although Exodus account starts from 11:1 only, from 10:1 wisdom's work in history is already recounted. Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 102; Collins, "Cosmos and Salvation," 318-319, 321, also share this view.

<sup>130</sup> Addison G. Wright, "Wisdom," in *The Old Testament*, ed. Roland E. Murphy, vol. 1 of *JBC*, ed. Raymond E. Brown et al. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1968; repr., London: Chapman, 1970), 563: because of the "juxtaposition" to chaps. 1-6, the Exodus story as well has "an eschatological dimension." See further Beauchamp, "Le salut"; Maurice Gilbert, "The Origins according to the Wisdom of Solomon," in *History and*

of salvation; the book, thus, tells us about immortality in the light of God's creation and salvation.

## 2.1 Immortality Related to the Domain Up: A Cosmological View on Immortality

From the first chapter of Wis, it becomes clear that in understanding immortality it is necessary to have a good impression of the cosmology of the book. Immortality is deeply related to the ordered world; this is obvious, among all, from the facts that the creation itself points to immortality and that the concept of immortality is often expressed via cosmological metaphors. In order to understand Wis' perception of immortality, thus, we have to relate it to its cosmology.

Wis provides us with a cosmology that depicts the universe divided into three realms: the Kingdom of God (10:10; 3:8), the earth (1:14) and the kingdom of Hades (1:16). With the help of the orientational metaphors<sup>131</sup> the three realms get a well-defined place in this cosmology. We can see the Kingdom of God conceived in terms of *up* (5:15; 9:10, 16, 17; 10:10), and the earth *down* (9:10, 16-17). The third realm, Hades is depicted as a lower realm, below the earth and, of course, below the realm of God (16:13). But let us first consider the orientation of the first two realms, the realm of God and that of human beings. Up and down are two different orientations that suggest that God's realm and the earth are contrasting realities. They have different sets of properties. God's kingdom is eternal (3:8; 13:1), while the timeframe of the earth is limited, based on its createdness (8:1; 9:1-2; also 2:2-5; 3:1-6; 4:10, 11, 14). This difference that is part of the creational contrast between the realm of God and the earth explains the need for wisdom in crossing from the human sphere into the divine one. Wisdom is the helping hand that takes man into the realm of God where he can experience a blessing communion with his Creator with all the gifts coming with it, the greatest of which is immortality (chaps. 7-9). Essentially, there is no ethical contrast between the Creator and creation as such since the earth is good and in total

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*Identity: How Israel's Later Authors Viewed Its Earlier History*, ed. Núria Calduch-Benages and Jan Liesen, DCLY 2006 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2006), 182; McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 173-174, 184f, 196-197; Puech, "The Book of Wisdom," 132. See Gilbert's summary of scholars who affirm that the Exodus story has eschatological perspective in Maurice Gilbert, "The Last Pages of the Wisdom of Solomon," in *La Sagesse de Salomon: Recueil d'études = The Wisdom of Solomon: Collected Essays*, AnBib 189 (Rome: GBP, 2011), 261-276. Having said this, I accept the unity of the book.

<sup>131</sup> See the orientational metaphors in Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 14-21.

harmony with its Creator (1:14). The earth never loses this connection with God, notwithstanding the coming of death in the world (1:16; 2:24; cf. 5:20-23; 19:6). However, ethical contrast between God and human beings appears when the wicked invite death (1:16; 2:24), but this contrast will only extend to those who befriend evil. The righteous is related to God and experiences the gifts of this communion. The place of the third realm is, thus, outside the duality of the divine sphere and creation in the sense that it originally has nothing to do with either (1:13-14). At the moment of befriending death, the wicked connect to this third realm, but Hades will never have sovereignty over the earth (5:17-23).

The cosmology of Wis we briefly described here constitutes the framework for our understanding of immortality. By identifying the three realms, their places and characteristics, and describing the dynamics between them, we get a clearer picture of the way the world is ordered in Wis. This undertaking also helps us to recognize the factors that determine the fate of human beings in Wis' perception. For the cosmos does not only provide the context where immortality or death falls to man's share, but man's fate depends on his relation and attitude towards these realms.<sup>132</sup> God created man to enjoy immortality (1:14; 2:23); this is the truth of Wis and the share of the righteous. Those who trust God will be in his realm and experience immortality (3:7-9), while the wicked that do not see the reality of God and immortality will experience death (1:16; 2:24; 4:19).

### 2.1.1 The Realm of God

#### 2.1.1.1 God in Himself and in Relation to the Cosmos

We start our discussion with a verse that takes us to the core of the concept of immortality:

μάταιοι μὲν γὰρ πάντες ἄνθρωποι φύσει  
οἷς παρῆν θεοῦ ἀγνωσία  
καὶ ἐκ τῶν ὁρωμένων ἀγαθῶν οὐκ ἴσχυσαν εἰδέναι τὸν ὄντα

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<sup>132</sup> See Collins, "Cosmos and Salvation," 320-324.



οὔτε τοῖς ἔργοις προσέχοντες ἐπέγνωσαν τὸν τεχνίτην<sup>133</sup> (13:1).<sup>134</sup>

A very important statement of God is pronounced here: God is designated as τὸν ὄντα. This simultaneously defines God<sup>135</sup> and the nature of his existence. The participle of εἰμί has a predicative use meaning *the one who is*;<sup>136</sup> thus God is called *the living*. This implies both that God is and that life belongs to God.<sup>137</sup> This statement of God can be contrasted with the author's remark on idols in 14:13: the idols are fornication because "they did not exist from the beginning nor will they last forever." Thus, τὸν ὄντα also defines life (of God) as a continuous existence.

The reference to the existence of God is set in the context of creation, and God is viewed in relation to the cosmos. God creates the world; this implies that God pre-exists the cosmos and it also implies that the possessor of life gives life (13:1-5; also 1:14; 6:7; 9:1-2; 10:1; 11:17, 24).<sup>138</sup> 13:1 makes the link between the existence and creatorship of God. Τὸν τεχνίτην<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> For all people who were ignorant of God were foolish by nature; and they were unable from the good things that are seen to know the one who exists, nor did they recognize the artisan while paying heed to his works.

<sup>134</sup> If not otherwise stated, Scripture quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible (1989).

<sup>135</sup> Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 253: the author of Wis displays teleological and cosmological proofs for the existence of God in 13:1-9. According to Ernest G. Clarke, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, CBC (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 9, the author is not interested in proving the existence of God since he "was neither a theologian, nor a philosopher," but believed in the supreme deity (for this see also Wright, "Wisdom," 565). "Consequently, the doctrine of God in this book describes his [God's] nature rather than asks the question whether he exists or not" (Clarke, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 9). However, by describing God as the Creator and King of the earth, the author also reflects on the existence of God. See Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 253.

<sup>136</sup> See "εἰμί," *BDAG*, ad loc.; "εἰμί," GRK, ad loc.

<sup>137</sup> The term is derived from Exod 3:14 where it designates the personal God of revelation but also reflecting the Platonist idea of God as an absolute being. See Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 249; Wright, "Wisdom," 565; Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 53; José Vílchez and Erik Eynikel, "Wisdom of Solomon," in *The International Bible Commentary: An Ecumenical Commentary for the Twenty-First Century* (ed. William R. Farmer et al.; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1998; repr., ed. Joseph Pathrapankal and Erik Eynikel; Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 2004), 981.

<sup>138</sup> See also Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 108; Plato, *Phaedr.* 245D-E. Winston (*The Wisdom of Solomon*, 40) notes that the author does not address the issue whether the creation process is eternal or not. A Middle Platonist view would be an eternal creative act. "Moreover, since the author of Wisd conceives of Sophia as a continuous emanation of the Godhead, and since it contains the paradigmatic forms of all things and is the instrument of creation, it would be reasonable to presume that its creative activity is also continuous. The fact is, however, that there are no grounds for assuming such philosophic consistency in a writer who seeks boldly to bridge two diverse traditions" (Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 40). Michael Kolarcik, "Creation and Salvation in the Book of Wisdom," in *Creation in the Biblical Traditions*, ed. Richard J. Clifford and John J. Collins, CBQMS 24 (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1992), 99: "The exodus event and the ultimate judgment are the continuity of God's creative efforts. Both events reestablish God's goodness and justice."

emphasizes that God is the unique Creator, who crafts all by means of wisdom (8:1; 9:1-2).<sup>140</sup> The metaphor of artistry suggests that “the creation is an aesthetically pleasing, indeed beautiful artwork which is to be admired, enjoyed, and praised.”<sup>141</sup> 13:3-5 pronounces the beauty of creation:

ὧν εἰ μὲν τῇ καλλονῇ τερπόμενοι ταῦτα θεοὺς ὑπελάμβανον  
γνώτωσαν πόσῳ τούτων ὁ δεσπότης ἐστὶ βελτίων  
ὁ γὰρ τοῦ κάλλους γενεσιάρχης ἔκτισεν αὐτά  
εἰ δὲ δύναμιν καὶ ἐνέργειαν ἐκπλαγέντες  
νοησάτωσαν ἀπ’ αὐτῶν πόσῳ ὁ κατασκευάσας αὐτά δυνατώτερός ἐστιν  
ἐκ γὰρ μεγέθους καὶ καλλονῆς κτισμάτων ἀναλόγως ὁ γενεσιουργὸς αὐτῶν θεωρεῖται<sup>142</sup>

But the main observation of the verses is that the creation reflects the Creator, the Lord of all these things, who is βελτίων (better) and δυνατώτερός (more powerful) than the created things.<sup>143</sup> A second important inference of the text is that the whole creation and all the values are measured against God; goodness, virtue, justice, power, love, and truth is viewed from the perspective of God. And because these values are all related to God, the contemplation of the

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<sup>139</sup> Artificer, craftsman, artisan, designer; “τεχνίτης,” *BDAG*, ad loc.; “τεχνίτης,” *LS*, ad loc. The title is applied for wisdom in 7:21 LXX; 8:6. Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 249, notes that God is not designated as *craftsman* or *artificer* in the Hebrew Bible, “although the image of the Divine Potter is well-known.” Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 54, also notes that the image of artificer is found in Greek philosophy.

<sup>140</sup> See Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 54. For the metaphor of the creator as an artisan in the Near East and wisdom literature, see Leo G. Perdue, *Wisdom in Revolt: Metaphorical Theology in the Book of Job*, JSOTSup 112; BLS 29 (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1991), 38-42.

<sup>141</sup> Perdue, *Wisdom in Revolt*, 41.

<sup>142</sup> If through delight in the beauty of these things people assumed them to be gods, let them know how much better than these is their Lord, for the author of beauty created them. And if people were amazed at their power and working, let them perceive from them how much more powerful is the one who formed them. For from the greatness and beauty of created things comes a corresponding perception of their Creator.

<sup>143</sup> The argument found in 13:3 is Greek rather than Jewish; see Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 56. “The biblical parallels alleged by J. Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 158, namely, Ps 19.1; Job 36.22; Isa 42.5 are not pertinent because they do not describe an argument for the existence of God but rather describe creation as manifesting his praise and glory as a theme for man’s praise” (Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 56 n. 111). Winston also notes that “the argument from analogy” is a “fundamental principle” of the Epicureans (*The Wisdom of Solomon*, 252-253).

creation in itself does not lead all the people to the perception of the Creator (13:1-9);<sup>144</sup> true perception of God implies opening up towards and acceptance of God.<sup>145</sup>

But let us return to the act of creation; God creates, and this results in the layering of the universe that is the differentiation of the realm of God (οὐρανός, βασιλείαν θεοῦ)<sup>146</sup> and that of the creation (γῆ, αἰών, κτίσις, also κόσμος and τὰ πάντα). Divine sphere is distinct from the creation that is the place of human beings. In this context τὸν ὄντα (13:1) comes to refer to the unique, transcendent Creator of all (1:14; 9:1-2), who is outside the created world.<sup>147</sup>

The transcendence of God is perceived by the orientational metaphor GOD IS UP;<sup>148</sup> God is called ὕψιστος (the most high) in 5:15 and 6:3, which defines God in terms of the domain up. Since God is up, everything related to God is also up: God's realm is up (9:10, 17; 10:10), righteousness<sup>149</sup> and wisdom is up (9:17; also see 8:3; 9:4, 9-10), eternity is up (13:1; 7:26; 2:23), and immortality is up (5:15). God's transcendence and his perception in terms of up imply that the earth is down, at least in the context of its relation to God. Looking at 10:10bc, we can again capture the transcendence of God and the creational contrast between God's realm and the earth:

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<sup>144</sup> However, this does not mean that the philosophers are prevented from getting true knowledge of God, and it does not mean determinism either, since those who contemplate the cosmos can come to the recognition of a transcendent God, which recognition will then lead, with "good will" (Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 54), to deeper understanding of the Creator.

<sup>145</sup> McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 140, says: "Beauty is one of the virtues, and to be able to appreciate beauty is an indicator of goodness and a life of virtue." Further she goes on to say that since virtues are "indivisible," those who take delight in the beauty of the created things (13:3-5) should possess the other virtues as well; thus, the philosophers' appreciation of beauty (13:1-9) is only "a false claim based upon the perception of the senses" (*Divine Judgment*, 140). The perceptual knowledge, therefore, does not mean true knowledge of God (*Divine Judgment*, 140-142). See more about the true knowledge of God at the discussion on knowledge.

<sup>146</sup> See Wis 9:10, 16; 16:20; 18:15, 16 for οὐρανός and 10:10 for βασιλείαν θεοῦ.

<sup>147</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 53, 59: the author of Wis rejects the Platonic understanding of the term and criticizes the philosophers that they never came to know the transcendent personal creator. Cf. also Collins, "Cosmos and Salvation," 319-330.

<sup>148</sup> Lakoff and Johnson developed these mnemonics; see Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*. The constructions indicated by small capitals are not linguistic expressions, but artificial structures that aim at showing more clearly how we conceptualize certain events, phenomena, etc., and what mappings are involved.

<sup>149</sup> See the definition of righteousness later.

	ἔδειξεν αὐτῷ	βασιλείαν θεοῦ
καὶ	ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ	γνῶσιν ἁγίων
	εὐπόρησεν αὐτὸν	ἐν μόχθοις
καὶ	ἐπλήθυνεν	τοὺς πόνους αὐτοῦ <sup>150</sup>

The verse also discloses that this contrast implies two different sets of properties. So we come to a second differentiation between the divine and the earthly realm that arises from the first distinction: the characteristics of God's realm are different from those of the earth. God's realm is transcendent and spiritual. The earth, on the contrary, is material. We can observe the toils, sufferings and insecurity of human beings that stand in opposition to the blessings of the Kingdom of God in 10:10.<sup>151</sup> Since we analyse the divine and human properties in more details below, we do not tend to discuss them here; we only mentioned them to point out the contrast between the divine realm and creation. This contrast also has the implications that everything related to God and his realm shares his characteristics (1:5, 15; 5:5; 7:22-24),<sup>152</sup> and everything related to the earth is material and has the properties of this created realm (7:1ff).

Now a third differentiation is implied in the concept of life. God's life is viewed as αἰδιος<sup>153</sup> life (2:23; 7:26) that is eternal in the absolute sense, without beginning or end, a timeless existence.<sup>154</sup> Human life in contrast to God's life is viewed as a limited existence that has a beginning and end (2:1-5; 7:5-6); man's lifetime is constraint by his nature as a created being, which means that he is θνητός that is mortal in his nature (7:1; 9:14; 15:17). As a result of this

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<sup>150</sup> She showed him the kingdom of God, and gave him knowledge of holy things [cf. Gen 28:10-17]; she prospered him in his labors, and increased the fruit of his toil.

<sup>151</sup> Andrew T. Glicksman, *Wisdom of Solomon 10: A Jewish Hellenistic Reinterpretation of Early Israelite History through Sapiential Lenses*, DCLS 9 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011), 127, argues for a positive tone in 10:10c saying that the best reading of the verse is that wisdom "made his toils fruitful," in accordance with 8:7.

<sup>152</sup> There may be various readings to interpret the term ἁγίων in 10:10: it may refer to the knowledge of the angels Jacob saw (Gen 28:12), of God's realm, or of God himself, as Glicksman, *Wisdom of Solomon 10*, 125-126, observes. He also notes that "the translation 'holy things' would encompass all three," which would fit Gen 28:12 (*Wisdom of Solomon 10*, 126).

<sup>153</sup> The adjective *eternal* only occurs in Wis 7:26 and 4 Macc 10:15, whereas the noun αἰδιότης, eternity, only occurs in Wis 2:23 in the Septuagint.

<sup>154</sup> Ramelli and Konstan, *Terms for Eternity*, 48; Guhrt, *NIDNTT* 3:827; Sasse, *TDNT*, 31. Guhrt, *NIDNTT* 3:828: as to the Jewish history, the reference point of everything that is considered eternal is God (e.g. the temple, monarchy); "the great promises, which are established for ever, are not simply timelessly and irrevocably valid. They remain bound to their living point of reference in the living God."

differentiation between eternal and human life, human life is defined as LIFE IS PRESENCE ON EARTH (2:1-5), while eternal life, since it is linked to God, is defined as LIFE IS PRESENCE IN THE REALM OF GOD (5:15). These are extensions of the metaphor LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE.<sup>155</sup> The metaphor LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE perceives life “as a bounded region that living beings are in,”<sup>156</sup> or, in the second case, God is in. However, while the metaphor that conceives earthly life in terms of presence is related to the metaphors that conceive birth as arrival and death as departure<sup>157</sup> (7:6) that is a limited period, the existence of God does not include these elements since his presence is a timeless, continuous existence.

Although human life is depicted mortal, Wis challenges this view on human life by saying that God created all for living (1:14; also 2:23) and the righteous lives forever (5:15). This implies that the Creator did not only create man, but he wants him to share immortality.<sup>158</sup> There appear other terms that define life besides *αἰδιος* and *θνητός*. Wis uses *αἰδιος* or *αἰδιότης*<sup>159</sup> only in references to God (2:23; 7:26);<sup>160</sup> *Αἰδιος* signifies eternal in the “strict sense” of classical philosophy: without beginning or end.<sup>161</sup> These terms are never used for denoting the afterlife of man that is described by *αἰώνιος* (3:8; 5:15; 6:21; 14:13; 8:13; 10:14),<sup>162</sup> *ἄθνατος* (1:15; 3:4;

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<sup>155</sup> As it was mentioned earlier, I base my insights on Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, also Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, and Kövecses, *Metaphor*. However, since they do not deal with eternal life, I develop the discussion with regard to eternal life on the basis of what they say about human life.

<sup>156</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 98.

<sup>157</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 1-2.

<sup>158</sup> I will return below to a more detailed discussion of immortality, including the question whether this extends to the whole creation as well; the point to be made here is that immortality is related to the realm of God.

<sup>159</sup> As it was mentioned earlier, *αἰδιος* means eternal, while *αἰδιότης* means eternity.

<sup>160</sup> Guhrt, *NIDNTT* 3:827, notes that while *αἰδιος*, a term “stemming intellectually from the syncretism of Hellenistic, Egyptian and Oriental thought,” is only found in Wis 7:26 and 4 Maccabees in LXX, *αἰώνιος*, is found 160 times; this “shows that we are concerned here with a characteristically biblical concrete idea which must be understood in relation to the whole duration of a man’s life.”

<sup>161</sup> Ramelli and Konstan, *Terms for Eternity*, 48-49.

<sup>162</sup> Ramelli and Konstan, *Terms for Eternity*, 49, note that *αἰώνιος* is “more general and polysemous” than *αἰδιος*. *αἰών* and *αἰώνιος* has many connotations: (pertaining to) a long period of time, repeated ages, past times, eternal, everlasting, *without end* or/and *without beginning*, an age, or it has the eschatological sense of the age to come. For this, see Ramelli and Konstan, *Terms for Eternity*, 5-70; “*αἰών*,” UBS, ad loc.; “*αἰών*,” ANLEX, ad loc.; “*αἰών*,” LS, ad loc.; “*αἰών*,” BDAG, ad loc.; “*αἰών*,” GRK, ad loc.; Sasse, *TDNT*, 31-32; Guhrt, *NIDNTT* 3:826-833. Ramelli and Konstan, *Terms for Eternity*, 41: it has “the possible connotation of a more absolute sense of ‘eternal’ when the term is used in reference to God, but only deriving from his very nature.” With reference to human beings, in the earlier Jewish writings eternity does not refer to timelessness; see Guhrt, *NIDNTT* 3:827-828. However, Sasse, *TDNT*, 32, notes that “in later Judaism it is sometimes set in antithesis to time.” See Ps 9:6; 20:5 LXX; Sir 1:2; Prov 8:23 in Guhrt, *NIDNTT* 3:828. Thus, here we can find more abstract

4:1; 8:13, 17; 15:3)<sup>163</sup> or ἄφθαρτος (2:23a; 6:18, 19).<sup>164</sup> When it comes to man, ἀθάνατος and ἄφθαρτος defines immortality against death, namely, against the notion of ultimate death and not mortality. Immortality or incorruption excludes ultimate death from a person's life, but it does not exclude physical death.<sup>165</sup> Man receives the gift of immortality in his human limitedness through which this limitedness is not cancelled but it is opened towards eternity. The righteous becomes immortal by receiving life from God that makes him live even after physical death.

To go on with our discussion on creation, Wis shows that God does not stop taking care of his creation. God always saved the righteous (see 3:1-5; 4:7, 11, 14) and wants to spare all (11:20-26; 12:1-22).<sup>166</sup> Divine “*providence* for the writer was the logical extension of his theological position that God ‘created all things that they might have being.’”<sup>167</sup> The hope of immortality is based on the Creator God who created all for living,<sup>168</sup> or as Reese says: “the ordered universe in general and man in particular are under the control of the all-powerful Creator and Savior, who

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notions of eternity. Sasse, *TDNT*, 32, also observes that “the NT took over the Jewish formulas but extended eternity to Christ (Heb. 1:10ff.; Rev. 1:17-18; 2:8). Here again eternity could be seen as the opposite of cosmic time, God's being and acts being put in terms of pre- and post- (1 Cor. 2:7; Col. 1:26; Eph. 3:9; Jn. 17:24; 1Pet. 1:20).” Ramelli and Konstan, *Terms for Eternity*, 48, note that εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα (the accusative of time) appears “in an absolute sense of ‘eternity’” in Wis (see 5:15a; 6:21). For the difference between αἰώνιος and αἰῶδιος in the Septuagint, see Ramelli and Konstan, *Terms for Eternity*, 48-50.

<sup>163</sup> Ἀφθαρσία originates from Epicureanism, meaning imperishable; see Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 121. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 65-66: “Epicureans did not believe in personal immortality for men, but they thought that the gods did live forever, although gods were material beings like men. . . . The bodies of the gods, although material, never disintegrate, and they are perfectly happy. They experience the uninterrupted enjoyment of total pleasure, which demands the recollection of past pleasure and the unmarred hope of endless satisfaction.” Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 66 n. 155, hints at a possible comparison of the Epicurean idea with the Wis' explanation of immortality “in terms of recollection (4:1) and hope (3:4).” He concludes (*Hellenistic Influence*, 64) that ἀθανασία and ἀφθαρσία are adopted by the author from Hellenistic speculation; they cannot be found in the canonical books of the LXX. However, Puech, “The Book of Wisdom,” 129, notes that both ἀθανασία and ἀφθαρσία “show in fact Semitic, not Greek, thinking patterns, since man was created in the image of God (κατ' εἰκόνα τοῦ θεοῦ, Gen 1:26-27).”

<sup>164</sup> We should, however, note that these terms are also used for God and his characteristics; see Wis 12:1; 17:2; 18:4.

<sup>165</sup> See the section on death below.

<sup>166</sup> Kolarcik, “Creation and Salvation,” 98: “For the Wisdom author, creation, exodus, and salvation are all related as signs of God's justice and goodness.”

<sup>167</sup> Clarke, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 93. See also Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 131.

<sup>168</sup> Roberto Vignolo, “Wisdom, Prayer and Kingly Pattern: Theology, Anthropology, Spirituality of Wis 9,” in Passaro and Bellia, *The Book of Wisdom in Modern Research*, 263, notes that the invocation in 9:1-2 sums up the theology on God: God of creation, God of the covenant and God of salvation.

guides man to unending friendship with himself.”<sup>169</sup> But because eternal life is related to the realm of God, one has to bridge over the realm of God in order to receive immortality. This is the point where we cannot avoid discussing two questions; both of them are related to the transcendence of God and the creational contrast between God and human beings. Firstly, how does God who is outside the cosmos order the creation? The second question is closely related to this: how can man encounter God? There is actually a third question: how can man trespass the creational difference in order to be immortal?

The transcendent God does not order the world directly. His involvement in the world is metaphorically expressed<sup>170</sup> by the names *spirit of the Lord* (9:17; 12:1), *holy spirit* (1:5), *hand of God* (3:1; 14:6), *word of God* (9:1; 18:15), *righteousness* (1:1, 15), *justice* (1:8), *power of God* (1:3; 11:15-12:18)<sup>171</sup> that all represent manifestations of God in the cosmos.<sup>172</sup> These manifestations finally evolve into a hypostasis in the figure of wisdom, and wisdom becomes associated with all of them. By *wisdom as hypostasis* I understand, in line with Tuschling,<sup>173</sup> that wisdom is hypostasized as a certain “projection” of God in the cosmos, or, as Reese says, she is in a way God himself.<sup>174</sup> This also means that she is not independent of God; she emanates from God and her source is God (1:7; 7:25-26).<sup>175</sup> Yet the descriptions show that she enjoys certain

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<sup>169</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 124.

<sup>170</sup> These are all metaphors of God since they perceive God’s acting in the world in terms of his different qualities, namely, power, righteousness, wisdom, etc. This perception of God in terms of his qualities, reflect on certain aspects of God. This is the point where John and Wis differ, since in John *the Logos* is not a metaphor of God, but he is different from God.

<sup>171</sup> These terms are synonymous; see Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 100; Clarke, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 14; Collins, “Cosmos and Salvation,” 320; McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 58, 98-99; Joseph Reider, *The Book of Wisdom: An English Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, JAL (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957), 51. Bennema, *The Power of Saving Wisdom*, 64-68, distinguishes between wisdom as the “source” and the spirit as the “agent” of salvation.

<sup>172</sup> Notwithstanding the Greek terminology, as Clarke, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 9, notes, Wis conceives of God in line with the Jewish thought: God “is the all-powerful creator of the universe” who “manifests himself in various forms” in the cosmos.

<sup>173</sup> R. M. M. Tuschling, *Angels and Orthodoxy: A Study in Their Development in Syria and Palestine from the Qumran texts to Ephrem the Syrian*, STAC 40 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 93.

<sup>174</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 45. He also notes that “Ps-Solomon rejects all systems of mediators between the divine and matter that had been introduced into philosophy and religious speculation by men who felt that it was impossible or undignified for the supreme deity to act immediately in the world” (*Hellenistic Influence*, 44-45).

<sup>175</sup> Gilbert, “The Origins,” 177. Brown, *Introduction*, 260 n. 93—he reflects on Willett, *Wisdom Christology in the Fourth Gospel*, 43-48, who debates whether wisdom is a hypostatization or personification—comments:

independence in moving between God and the people (7:22-27; 8:3-4; 9:4, 9-10).<sup>176</sup> By this we have already hinted at another duality besides the dynamic of dependence-independence: wisdom is both transcendent and immanent in the world.<sup>177</sup> Wisdom is pictured living with God (8:3-4; 9:4, 9-10, 17); she is said to come from the holy heavens, ἐξ ἁγίων οὐρανῶν and from on high, ἀπὸ ὑψίστων (9:10, 17; see also 16:20-26). And yet, she is also present in the world (1:7; 8:1; 7:22-27). “The Wisdom of Solomon is obviously in continuity with the Hebrew wisdom tradition, but it develops the cosmic character of wisdom and describes it in language which is more consistently conceptual and scientific.”<sup>178</sup> Her transcendence is defined as presence with God, whereas her immanence is defined as presence on earth. Wisdom’s movement from heaven

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“Hypostatizing depicts as an independent being an attribute that otherwise would be thought of as the action or characteristic of another, especially God . . . Personification involves representing in personal terms something, especially an attribute, that is not a person.” Francis J. Moloney adds the observation of David Noel Freedman here (Brown, *Introduction*, 260-261 n. 93): “For the Hebrew Bible, Lady Wisdom is described in two ways. She is fully personified, i.e., as someone in association with God, and reflecting a polytheistic background in which goddesses played major roles in mythology. At the same time, the word itself is an attribute of God, part of his makeup, and the instrument by which he plans and executes his program. The short answer to the question would be ‘both,’ but a longer answer might be ‘neither,’ on the grounds that such terms do not really apply to the religion of the Hebrew Bible.” See also Leo G. Perdue, *Wisdom Literature: A Theological History* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2007), 296.

<sup>176</sup> Consequently, we cannot agree with Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 242, who says that wisdom is “a feminine replacement for the traditional expression of God, who even in the same book can equally be called male.” Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 370 n. 102, also criticises this view. See also Tuschling, *Angels and Orthodoxy*, 95, although he goes further and suggests that wisdom is possibly depicted in “human form” in 9:9-10. Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 109, notes in relation to 7:25-27: “Here one sees the beginning of a groping beyond just personification of an attribute of God to a hypostasis.” See also James L. Crenshaw, *Old Testament Wisdom: An Introduction*, 3rd ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2010), 184; Helmer Ringgren, *Word and Wisdom: Studies in the Hypostatization of Divine Qualities and Functions in the Ancient Near East* (Lund: Ohlsson, 1947), 119.

<sup>177</sup> Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 38, remarks: “it may be said that there is an aspect of God’s essence in everything, including the human mind, which remains inseparable from God.” Winston also raises the question that “if Wisdom is already present in man’s mind, as she is indeed in every part of the universe, what is the significance of man’s hot pursuit of her” (*The Wisdom of Solomon*, 41)? His answer is that there are two perspectives upon wisdom, that of man, which senses the movements of wisdom and that of God, from which it is always present (*The Wisdom of Solomon*, 41-42). See also the chapter on immortality as presence and destination. Winston may be right concerning the two viewpoint; cf. 7:22-23 (where wisdom is described irresistible and penetrating all) and 1:4-5. Although φιλάγαθον (loving the good) and καὶ διὰ πάντων χωροῦν πνευμάτων νοερῶν καθαρῶν λεπτοτάτων (and penetrating through all spirits that are intelligent, pure, and altogether subtle) in 7:22-23 also restrict wisdom’s movements just like 1:4-5; accordingly wisdom only penetrates what is intelligent, pure and good.

<sup>178</sup> Collins, “Cosmos and Salvation,” 326. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 196, also notes that Wisdom is identified with the holy spirit (1:5) and the spirit of the Lord (1:7), which is not met in Hebrew wisdom literature.



to earth affects people's life. She passes through the righteous (7:24, 27),<sup>179</sup> but flees from the wicked (1:4-5), thus, saving the righteous by linking them to God and judging the wicked. But before discussing this, we should refer to another issue.

There is a kind of duality in wisdom's character due to its presence in the realm of God and also on earth. Although wisdom is depicted as the spirit of the Lord (1:4-5), "the breath of the power of God" (7:25), "a pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty" (7:25),<sup>180</sup> and "a reflection of eternal light" (7:26),<sup>181</sup> all of which emphasize her incorporeality, she is, as Collins says, "so imbedded in the universe that it can be expressed in physical terms."<sup>182</sup> This, however, does not necessarily mean that wisdom is material; the corporeal understanding of wisdom may be the consequence of the way wisdom's presence in the universe is metaphorically viewed.<sup>183</sup>

Being both transcendent and immanent, wisdom can be a link between God and the cosmos. "Through his abstract method of presenting divine Wisdom Ps-Solomon has found a means of preserving the absolute transcendence of the unique God of revelation while at the same time

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<sup>179</sup> See more about the metaphor that structures wisdom living with God and human beings below.

<sup>180</sup> Cf. Witherington, *John's Wisdom*, 55.

<sup>181</sup> Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 99, mentions that Wis 7:26 is "a culmination of an already much older tradition" found in Psalms. Light is also connected to the tradition of Sophia that presents her as the first creation of God (Prov 8:22; Sir 24:9), which according to Gen was light.

<sup>182</sup> Collins, "Cosmos and Salvation," 321. Tuschling, *Angels and Orthodoxy*, 142-143, says that "Wis 7.22-25 describes the spirit that is in Wisdom, and Wisdom herself, in ways that oscillate between corporeal and incorporeal understandings." She is subtle and mobile, intelligent, and penetrates all things. These features according to Tuschling could imply "a subtle but material element," while wisdom's description as the breath of the power of God, the emanation of the glory of God, a reflection of the eternal light implies that she is incorporeal. See also Christopher Stead, *Divine Substance* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1977), 177.

<sup>183</sup> Similarly to Stoic *pneuma* and Hebrew *hokma*, wisdom pervades all things. See Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 100; Vilchez and Eynikel, "Wisdom of Solomon," 977. For the Stoic influence on the attributes of wisdom, see André-Jean Festugière, *Le Dieu cosmique*, vol. 2 of *La révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste, EBib* (Paris: Librairie Lecoffre; Gabalda et Cie, 1949), 514-515. For the influence of Isis cult on the presentation of wisdom, see Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 40-50, who concludes that "the principle areas of hellenistic culture that have influenced the Sage are Epicurean speculation on immortality and its nature, popular religion of hellenized Egypt as exercised in the Isis cult, and anthropological and ethical teachings found in the treatises on kingship" (89). For a more detailed discussion on the influence of the Isis cult on wisdom, see John S. Kloppenborg, "Isis and Sophia in the Book of Wisdom," *HTR* 75 (1982): 57-84. For the blending of Jewish thought and Greek conceptual thinking in the figure of wisdom, see more in Yehoshua Amir, "The Figure of Death in the 'Book of Wisdom,'" *JJS* 30 (1979): 155-156; Collins, "Cosmos and Salvation," 317-338; Alexander A. Di Lella, "Conservative and Progressive Theology: Sirach and Wisdom," in *Studies in Ancient Israelite Wisdom*, ed. James L. Crenshaw, LBS (New York: Ktav, 1976), 408-416. Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 112, notes that Wis is the first where a "profound interaction or marriage between Judaism and Hellenism could be noted."

offering in attractive imagery the possibility of intimate personal communion with him.”<sup>184</sup> Thus, on the one hand, the omniscient, transcendent God is present in the cosmos through his wisdom, while on the other hand, wisdom is also man’s possibility to touch the transcendent.

What does this link between God and cosmos include? Wisdom assists God at the creation. She is called ἡ πάντων τεχνίτις<sup>185</sup> in 7:21 and 8:6. The chiasm in 9:1b-2a identifies the word of God with wisdom<sup>186</sup> and it implies that God created all through wisdom:

ὁ ποιήσας τὰ πάντα  
ἐν λόγῳ σου  
καὶ  
τῇ σοφίᾳ σου  
κατασκευάσας ἄνθρωπον<sup>187</sup>

Wisdom has a role in establishment and maintenance of order in the creation as 8:1 pronounces:

διατείνει δὲ ἀπὸ πέρατος ἐπὶ πέρας εὐρώστως  
καὶ διοικεῖ τὰ πάντα χρηστῶς<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 41-42.

<sup>185</sup> The artificer of all things. Mathias Delcor, “The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Hellenistic Period,” in *The Hellenistic Age*, ed. W. D. Davies and Louis Finkelstein, vol. 2 of *The Cambridge History of Judaism*, ed. W. D. Davies and Louis Finkelstein (Cambridge: University Press, 1989; repr., 2008), 484: the term, τεχνίτις is taken from Hellenistic philosophy together with several other terms that serve as attributes to wisdom, i.e. ἀμάραντος (6:12), ἀπαύγασμα (7:26), ἀπόρροια (7:25), πάρεδρος (9:4), etc.

<sup>186</sup> See John Painter, *The Quest for the Messiah: The History, Literature, and Theology of the Johannine Community* (2nd ed.; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), 150; Harris, *The Origin of the Prologue*, 11; Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:484; Joseph R. Dodson, *The ‘Powers’ of Personification: Rhetorical Purpose in the Book of Wisdom and the Letter to the Romans*, BZNW 161 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008), 82-87; Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 376 n. 123. For a contrary opinion, see Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, xxxix. Clarke, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 63, equates the word with “the creative word” of Gen 1:26, 28 and Ps. 33:6. Goodrick (*Wisdom*, 249) also thinks that ἡ παντοδύναμός χειρ in 11:17 “is plainly equivalent to παντοδύναμός λόγος of 18<sup>15</sup>, showing that ‘Wisdom’ regarded the Λόγος simply as an exertion of God’s power; not the Philonian Logos at all.” Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 38, says: “it is by no means clear that ‘word’ and ‘wisdom’ here refer to Logos-Sophia,” but 8:4 makes it clear that “Wisdom is identical with the Divine Mind through which the Deity acts.”

<sup>187</sup> Who have made all things by your word, and by your wisdom have formed humankind.

<sup>188</sup> She reaches mightily from one end of the earth to the other, and she orders all things well.

The creation is good and incorrupt because of the Creator (1:14)<sup>189</sup> and because of wisdom. Wisdom actually “becomes an immanent cosmological principle”<sup>190</sup> that establishes and preserves the goodness and harmony of the cosmos (1:14; chaps. 6-9). Wisdom has impact on the life of the individual as well; she is the guide of human beings (5:6-7; 9:18; chaps. 10-19, esp. 10:10-17). Her role in the moral life of the people<sup>191</sup> can be grasped in several texts. She gives instructions (1:5; 6:17; 7:14), which encompasses both the knowledge of God (2:13) and that which is pleasing to God (7:16ff; 8:7; 9:18).<sup>192</sup> She teaches law (2:12; 6:4, 18; 16:6; 18:4, 9)<sup>193</sup> and virtues (8:7).

#### God—Covenant—Torah—Wisdom

We shall very briefly refer to the question how wisdom relates to the covenant and the Torah. We can see a transformation of traditional ideas in Wis; the concept of relationship between God and humankind is here appropriated to the diaspora. Accordingly, we can see both a process of universalization and individualization. The traditional idea that viewed the relationship between Israel and God in terms of covenant and Torah (see Ps 1) is now explained by wisdom.<sup>194</sup> God sends wisdom to humankind; wisdom’s laws<sup>195</sup> make one righteous. And since wisdom mediates God’s will from the

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<sup>189</sup> See more about the act of creation below.

<sup>190</sup> Wright, “Wisdom,” 559.

<sup>191</sup> See Wright, “Wisdom,” 559.

<sup>192</sup> What the concept of knowledge includes see below.

<sup>193</sup> McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 115 n. 70, notes that wisdom is identified with the Torah in Sir 24:10-28: “It is possible that these terms of Word, Torah, *Logos* and Wisdom, had been interchangeable for a period of time.”

<sup>194</sup> Tobias Nicklas, “Schöpfungstheologie im Buch Baruch: Bedeutung und Funktion,” in *Theologies of Creation in Early Judaism and Ancient Christianity: In Honour of Hans Klein*, ed. Tobias Nicklas and Korinna Zamfir, DCLS 6 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010), 81-93, notes a similar identification in Baruch where the Torah is identified with wisdom (3:9-4:1) that was found at the creation (3:32). As a consequence, those who live according to the Torah will live, while those who separate from it will die (4:1). Nicklas also notes (“Schöpfungstheologie,” 89) that while wisdom is a gift of God, Israel got it through the Torah; thus “creation theology is imbedded in covenantal theology” [own trans.].

<sup>195</sup> Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 66: Wis refers to the Law of Moses here; see also Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 100-101, on verse 6:4. However, unlike Sir 24, Wis nowhere explicitly identifies wisdom with the Torah. This, of course, does not mean that Wis does not relate to the Torah, but as we said above, there is a process of universalization. Cf. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 39. Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 43, adds: “Very likely he [the author of Wis] believed with Philo that the teachings of the Torah were tokens of the Divine Wisdom, and that they were in harmony with the laws of the universe and as such implant all the virtues in man . . . She is clearly the Archetypal Torah, of which the Mosaic Law is but an image.” David Seeley, “Narrative, the Righteous Man and the Philosopher: An Analysis of the Story of the *Dikaïos* in Wisdom 1-5,” *JSP* 7 (1990): 72, also assumes that νόμος “recalls” both the Torah and the law in the Hellenistic culture, and that the author “brings up the term but gives it no specific content may be intentional.” Seeley also notes that παιδεία in

beginning of the creation (she creates and protects the order of creation), this also makes a change with regards to the moment of giving the Law. What Collins<sup>196</sup> says about Sirach that also associates the Torah with wisdom, may also be significant of Wis: “Sirach allows no interval between the creation and the giving of the Torah. Rather, he implies that the law of life was given to humanity from the beginning. The sin of Adam (which Sirach does not even acknowledge) is no more significant than the sin of anyone else who breaks the Law.” This is probably true of Wis as well, since wisdom that brings the Law is in the world right from the beginning (9:1-2), and she establishes the righteous’ communion with God. Addressing the righteous person also comes with an individualization of the covenant ideas: it is one’s attitude towards wisdom that determines one’s relationship with God.

Since wisdom is the manifestation of God, she is all that God is; therefore she can mediate all the characteristics of the divine world, including immortality. Therefore wisdom is an “unfailing treasure for mortals” (7:14a) “for God loves nothing so much as the person who lives with wisdom” (7:28).<sup>197</sup> Wisdom makes people righteous, or, in other words, the righteous is called

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2:12b also has both Jewish and Hellenistic connotations. Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Wisdom and Law in the Old Testament: The Ordering of Life in Israel and Early Judaism*, OBS (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 147, notes that the author basically refers to the law indirectly, and he does not mention it when he refers to Moses (10:15-11:14). Wis speaks about “her law” (6:18), but this probably encompasses more than the Torah: “the author’s ethic is not limited to Torah and the *halakah*. Much of it, in fact, has close affinity with Stoic moral philosophy, e.g., the cardinal virtues of self-control, prudence, justice and courage (8:7)” (Blenkinsopp, *Wisdom and Law*, 147). Thus many of the scholars are of the opinion that law has a broader sense than the Mosaic Law. Moreover, wisdom is associated with grace and truth (3:9; 4:15), similarly to Jesus. Further, even if it refers to the Torah, it implies moral law and not cultic law; as Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 323, notes, receiving wisdom does not need any ritual. See Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Law and Wisdom from Ben Sira to Paul: A Tradition Historical Enquiry into the Relation of Law, Wisdom, and Ethics*, WUNT 2/16 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1985), 132-134, who lists the passages in which Torah and wisdom may implicitly be identified, but also accepts (132) that “the law is conceived of as a universal entity. The significance of the particularistic Jewish laws is played down. The ethical perspective of the law is emphasized.” Luca Mazzinghi, “Law of Nature and Light of the Law in the Book of Wisdom (Wis 18:4c),” in *Studies in the Book of Wisdom*, ed. Géza G. Xeravits and József Zsengellér, JSJ.S 142 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 40, however, also notes that even in Wis 6:4, where one is inclined to see the natural law, one should remember that the addressees are the Jews of Alexandria: “Therefore, in my opinion, we cannot entirely exclude from Wis 6:4 a further allusion to the Mosaic Law.”

<sup>196</sup> John J. Collins, “Wisdom, Apocalypticism and the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in Collins, *Seers, Sybils and Sages*, 376.

<sup>197</sup> Reider says that it is not clear how one can obtain immortality; sometimes through justice (1:15), sometimes through law (6:18), or kingship through wisdom (8:17), or the knowledge of God’s power (15:3) (*The Book of Wisdom*, 105). However, we can see that at the end all these statements describe the features of being in connection with wisdom, since justice is obtained through wisdom, the law is wisdom’s law, kingship is through her and she is the root of knowledge.

righteous because he has wisdom (7:7-30; 8:5-7).<sup>198</sup> Thus wisdom is on the one hand the manifestation of God, but on the other hand, she is also the human understanding that results from man's communion with wisdom. Ordering the cosmos also implies judging the evil and saving the righteous. Ἐν αὐτῇ τὰ πάντα καινίζει (7:27) suggests the renewing power of wisdom in terms of salvation.<sup>199</sup> Wisdom guides humankind and brings it back to the path of righteousness (9:18; see also chaps. 10-19); thus, she is God's agent in salvation (8:4). She also mediates the judgment of God (1:6-11; 18:14ff). These functions will be discussed in detail with regard to the images of God as king, father and friend.

Finally, we have to discuss another quality of wisdom with regard to the above mentioned text, 9:1b-2a that will expand our concept of immortality. These verses also imply the pre-existence of wisdom, since if wisdom was present at the creation, she must pre-exist the creation. 9:9ab takes us further on this line:

καὶ μετὰ σοῦ ἡ σοφία            ἡ εἰδυῖα τὰ ἔργα σου  
καὶ  
παρουῖσα ὅτε ἐποίεις τὸν κόσμον<sup>200</sup>

Wisdom is with God at the time of creation.<sup>201</sup> Πάρεμι<sup>202</sup> underscores the idea that life means presence. But the verse also qualifies this presence. Μετὰ σοῦ ἡ σοφία and παρουῖσα ὅτε ἐποίεις τὸν κόσμον together describe the existence of wisdom in terms of life with God. LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE is elaborated by μετὰ σοῦ, which defines life as presence with God, a thought also underlined by 8:3; 9:4, 10.<sup>203</sup> The verse also implies that wisdom has knowledge and this

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<sup>198</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 141: the author "equates the just man with the wise man, for no one can be just without experiencing divine Wisdom."

<sup>199</sup> See more below at the discussion of the metaphor of friendship.

<sup>200</sup> With you is wisdom, she who knows your works and was present when you made the world.

<sup>201</sup> Kolarcik, "Creation and Salvation," 103: "It is this relationship between God and wisdom, at the time of creation, that the author uses to explain the continuous effort of wisdom to bring humanity back onto the paths of creation."

<sup>202</sup> Be present.

<sup>203</sup> Folker Siegert, "Der Logos, 'älterer Sohn' des Schöpfers und 'zweiter Gott': Philons Logos und der Johannesprolog," in Frey and Schnelle, *Kontexte des Johannesevangeliums*, 280: Wis 8:3-4 and 9:4 follows on Prov 8; Wis comes close to polytheism with a purpose of dethroning any other gods or ideals in favour of wisdom. For the influence of Prov 8 on Wis 7-9, see also Gilbert, "Wisdom Literature," 285, 309-311.

knowledge is based on her relation with God and her presence at the time of creation. This idea defines true knowledge in terms of communion with God.<sup>204</sup> Since wisdom's existence is defined by these verses as existence with God, and existence with God is actually a metaphor for eternal life, we can see that the text also implies the eternity of wisdom. Wisdom is called τὸ ἄφθαρτόν σου πνεῦμά<sup>205</sup> (12:1) and λαμπρὰ καὶ ἀμάραντός<sup>206</sup> (6:12), which clearly states the eternity of wisdom. Moreover, if wisdom is identified with God, she must be eternal. Since God is eternal (2:23b; 7:26), his characteristics are also eternal (1:15; 7:26; 12:1; 4:2c; 6:12; 18:4). Thus, although 8:3 would allude to the creation of wisdom, the "noble birth" gains another meaning if we take into account what we have discussed: it becomes a metaphor for the divine nature of wisdom.<sup>207</sup> As to πῶς ἐγένετο ἀπαγγεῖλαι<sup>208</sup> in 6:22, this probably does not refer to the idea that wisdom was created, but how wisdom came into Solomon's life or the life of the creation (see 7:7, also chaps. 7-9).<sup>209</sup>

The characteristics of wisdom, her transcendence and immanence, presence with God and her eternity have serious impact on the way the afterlife of human beings is conceptualized. Since wisdom is both transcendent and immanent she can make the link between God and the people. Wisdom has a continuous movement towards and away from people (1:5; 6:13, 16; 7:24, 27; also 4:2). We have seen wisdom fleeing from the wicked in 1:5; now we take a look at her union with the righteous in 6:16:

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<sup>204</sup> See knowledge below.

<sup>205</sup> Your immortal spirit.

<sup>206</sup> Bright and unfading, with the latter alluding to "immortality and everlastingness of Wisdom" (Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 103). See also Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 153; Clarke, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 46.

<sup>207</sup> Cf. David Winston, "Philo and the Wisdom of Solomon on Creation, Revelation, and Providence: The High-Water Mark of Jewish Hellenistic Fusion," in Kugel, *Shem in the Tents of Japhet*, 111.

<sup>208</sup> I will tell you how she came to be.

<sup>209</sup> See McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 99-100; Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 106. Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 62, also sees this explanation (Solomon's experience of wisdom) as a possibility, but he rather relates 6:22 with 7:22-27. The parallel between John 1:1 and Wis 6:22 is mentioned by Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:CXXIII, and Painter, *The Quest for the Messiah*, 146, as reference to the pre-existence of wisdom. So it could be that Wis 6:22 is not a reference to the "beginning" of wisdom in Solomon's life, but to the "beginning" of wisdom in the life of the creation; thus the verse alludes to the creation, just like 9:1-2, thereby stating that wisdom that was at the beginning is pre-existent. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 43, reads it as wisdom's coming "for just men." Any of these explanations, however, claims the pre-existence of wisdom.

ὅτι τοὺς ἀξίους αὐτῆς αὐτὴ περιέρχεται ζητοῦσα  
καὶ ἐν ταῖς τρίβοις φαντάζεται αὐτοῖς εὐμενῶς  
καὶ ἐν πάσῃ ἐπινοίᾳ ὑπαντᾷ αὐτοῖς<sup>210</sup>

The dynamic character of wisdom displays the dynamics of the communication between God and the people. God reveals himself through wisdom (cf. 1:2b) and human beings establish a relationship with God through living with wisdom (7:14). Since wisdom is eternal, people who receive wisdom will also live forever (5:15). Further, the characteristics of wisdom described in 7:22-27 are also eternal; they “are not time or creation bound, they have no beginning or ending and are, consequently, the guarantee that wisdom will deliver the immortality promised in 8.13.”<sup>211</sup>

But how does wisdom deliver immortality? Since she is transcendent, people who accept her will also rise to the realm of God, thus, overcoming the creational contrast. Going back to 10:10 that gives us an insight into the divine world, we can also see that it presents us the possibility of entering it. We also understand that the way to the divine world is through the one who made this perception possible, the wisdom of God. The limited and material character of human beings can be transcended by wisdom (8:19-21; 9:13-18), which is described in 7:24 as a spirit so pure and spiritual that it can enter anything. Since wisdom lives with God, people who are in communion with her will also live with God; and life with God, as we have seen, means immortality.

This is how man can trespass his mortal nature by wisdom, who mediates the righteous’ relationship with God that results in immortality. 10:10 leads us to further conclusions: since the wisdom of God is present in human world we can grasp the present eschatology of the book that will be developed via the metaphor that presents the righteous as the child of God who lives in communion with God already on earth. Because of wisdom’s presence in the world, salvation is already present. As Collins says, “wisdom found salvation within the processes of nature and affirmed the principle of order in all creation, while apocalypticism posited a sharp break

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<sup>210</sup> Because she goes about seeking those worthy of her, and she graciously appears to them in their paths, and meets them in every thought.

<sup>211</sup> McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 100.

between the heavenly regions and the earthly, or between the present world and the world to come, and rejected the present world order.”<sup>212</sup>

### 2.1.1.2 God the King and Judge

Several aspects of God’s realm were disclosed in the passages we have discussed up to now, namely that in terms of orientation it is perceived as a region above, it is transcendent, it is eternal, and its characteristics differ from those of the created world. To this image another aspect is added by the *royal metaphor*: the heavenly realm appears as a kingdom (10:10).<sup>213</sup> Although the title *King* is not used for God,<sup>214</sup> elements of the royal metaphor are used (9:4, 10; 10:10; 18:15, 24),<sup>215</sup> and throughout the text God is presented “as the universal ruler of the cosmos who, like a wise and provident king, ‘cares for all men’ without exception”<sup>216</sup> (8:3; 11:17-26; 12:15-19).

3:8 describes God as eternal king:

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<sup>212</sup> Collins, “Cosmos and Salvation,” 337.

<sup>213</sup> Coloe, *Dwelling in the Household of God*, 74: “Kingdom of God” is found only in Wis 10:10 within the OT. Glicksman, *Wisdom of Solomon 10*, 125: the term “most likely refers to the angels ascending and descending on the ladder reaching to heaven that Jacob sees in his dream (Gen 28:12). From his vision, Jacob gains an understanding of how God’s realm functions. The following colon is probably related to this understanding.” See also Stefan Schorch, “Jacob’s Ladder and Aaron’s Vestments: Traces of Mystical and Magical Traditions in the Book of Wisdom,” in Xeravits and Zsengellér, *Studies in the Book of Wisdom*, 184-187. On the contrary, John J. Collins, “The Kingdom of God in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha,” in Collins, *Seers, Sybils and Sages*, 105, says: “In the philosophical circles of Diaspora Judaism the ‘kingdom’ took on a more spiritual, or ethical sense. . . . Here [in Wis] the kingdom is something that the righteous enjoy after death.” Collins goes on observing that “the apparent equation of the ‘kingdom of God’ with the world of the angels is reminiscent of Daniel, and indeed the Wisdom of Solomon is influenced at many points by apocalyptic traditions. It does not, however, retain the expectation of a kingdom on earth, and there is a tendency to identify the kingdom with wisdom and righteousness which are the root of immortality (Wis 15:3)” (“The Kingdom of God in the Apocrypha,” 105-106). Note that 6:4 also mentions the βασιλεία, but the context of the verse is different and it is more likely that βασιλεία refers to the earthly rule of the kings, who, however, are also under the rule of God. Similarly, we take 9:12 as referring to earthly rule. See also n. 231 below and the chapter on earth.

<sup>214</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 74: “The Sage does not use titles for God that would seem to limit his concern and power to the Israelites, and he avoids the anthropomorphic titles so common in the Hebrew Bible.” We should, however, not forget that Wis uses *father* (see references below), *saviour* (16:7), and *Lord* (1:1, 7, 9; 2:13; 3:8, etc.) to refer to God.

<sup>215</sup> Throne, diadem, power.

<sup>216</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 74.



κρινούσιν ἔθνη  
καὶ κρατήσουσιν λαῶν  
καὶ βασιλεύσει αὐτῶν κύριος εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας<sup>217</sup>

Since God is eternal, his kingship and kingdom, too, are eternal; εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας means eternity in an absolute sense.<sup>218</sup> This verse will be analysed below together with other instances of the royal metaphor<sup>219</sup> with regard to the righteous; so we restrict the discussion here to its relevance to the Kingdom of God. The context describes the state of the righteous after death (3:1-9), so the verse is not about earthly rule, but it reflects on the righteous' exaltation as king in the Kingdom of God. The verse on the one hand emphasizes the eternal kingship of God, but on the other hand it also implies a relationship between God and the righteous: the righteous can rule<sup>220</sup> because God will rule over them forever. This lets us perceive the qualitative aspect of the Kingdom of God. There are several other properties that also describe the Kingdom of God qualitatively. 3:1-9 associates different states with the Kingdom of God: being in the hand of God (3:1), being at peace (3:3), being in love, truth and mercy (3:9), and power (3:8). All these images perceive the different aspects of the proximity to God. Since we analyse these metaphors below, we do not intend to describe them here; what we want to underline is that although the Kingdom of God is a cosmological entity in Wis that perceives the realm of God in terms of a kingdom, this βασιλεία also has qualitative attributes that understands the Kingdom of God in terms of relationship between God and the righteous. As a result, the Kingdom of God appears as a metaphor for the communion of the righteous with God, and, eventually, a metaphor for immortality (3:4).<sup>221</sup>

Our attention should now turn towards the king of this kingdom: God. The image of God as king is a very potent metaphor in Wis that gives us important insights on the concept of immortality.

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<sup>217</sup> They will judge nations and rule over peoples, and the Lord will reign over them forever [own trans.].

<sup>218</sup> Ramelli and Konstan, *Terms for Eternity*, 48.

<sup>219</sup> 5:16 and 6:20 also make use of the royal metaphor, but we discuss them later with reference to the exaltation of the righteous.

<sup>220</sup> Typical apocalyptic idea; we can see instances of this metaphor in John as well, although there Jesus' disciples are given the authority to judge on earth and not after death.

<sup>221</sup> Viewing the Kingdom of God as a transcendent realm is competent with the idea that Wis does not project a Kingdom of God on earth; the Kingdom of God is rather associated with immortality. See Dennis C. Duling, "Kingdom of God, Kingdom of Heaven," *ABD* 4:55.

God appears as a sovereign ruler in several verses (5:17-23; 6:3-8; 9:1-3; 11:21-26; 12:12-18; 13:3, 9),<sup>222</sup> but in order to understand its full meaning, we have to see what the source domain king implies, and then see how this domain is applied to God.

In ancient agrarian societies the king was “the *owner*” of the state.<sup>223</sup> As such, his task was to guarantee the order, security and well-being of the nation. The king was a warrior, who used military force to defend his people. The king was also a judge, who maintained the order through justice.<sup>224</sup> Whitelam notes that the terms used for order and justice in Mesopotamia and Egypt, *mēšarum* and *ma‘at*, include the connotations of justice, order and truth, and they “entail the notions of well-being, fertility, and prosperity.”<sup>225</sup> These functions are then interrelated; the king’s “basic duty is then to preserve and protect the order and harmony of the kingdom.”<sup>226</sup> The Hellenistic kingly ideal is similar to this, but it includes the notions of virtue and wisdom;<sup>227</sup> *basileus* refers to the “lawful king.”<sup>228</sup> Plato “depicts the benevolent ruler, who knows only his own will as law.”<sup>229</sup> Wis uses these characteristics and functions of the king, especially warfare, judgment and providence, and maps them into the domain God, thus, perceiving God as the ideal king.

Having described God as the king of his transcendent kingdom above (10:10; 3:8), we turn our attention towards another aspect of his kingship: God’s sovereignty over the earth. Through creating the earth, he owns it and rules over it. The earth is called τῆς αὐτοῦ βασιλείας<sup>230</sup> in

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<sup>222</sup> See Armin Schmitt, *Das Buch der Weisheit: Ein Kommentar* (Würzburg: Echter, 1986), 107; McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 49. There are many other passages that reflect the sovereignty of God; the whole Exodus story reflects the power of God who is the creator and lord of all. We picked these verses because they are very explicit in claiming the omnipotence of God. For the detailed description of the Exodus narrative in Wis, see Cheon, *The Exodus Story*.

<sup>223</sup> Keith W. Whitelam, “King and kingship,” *ABD* 4:40, who also says that the Hebrew Bible’s term for king, *melek*, is based on the Arabic root *mlk*, whose basic meaning is “‘to own completely’ and may indicate a similar basic meaning of the Hebrew *melek*.”

<sup>224</sup> Whitelam, *ABD* 4:42, 44.

<sup>225</sup> Whitelam, *ABD* 4:44.

<sup>226</sup> Whitelam, *ABD* 4:45.

<sup>227</sup> Duling, *ABD* 4:54.

<sup>228</sup> H. Kleinknecht, “*Basileús* in the Greek World,” *TDNT*, 97.

<sup>229</sup> Kleinknecht, *TDNT*, 97.

<sup>230</sup> His [God’s] kingdom.

6:4,<sup>231</sup> which implies that God is the real owner and king of the earth in all the senses. Although he appoints earthly kings, he rules over them; he gives them power, but he can also withdraw this power (6:1-21; 5:23). God appears to be the “wise ‘manager’” of the universe that is “a common theme in Hellenistic literature on the ideal king”<sup>232</sup> (12:15f). Chap. 12 lists δικαιοσύνη (12:15), δύναμις (12:15, 17), ἐπιειχία (12:18) and φιλόανθρωπος (12:19)<sup>233</sup> as the properties of God.<sup>234</sup> God gives the laws (see 2:12; 16:6), and he is the possessor of virtues and, therefore, all the virtues in the world have to be measured against him. 8:7 mentions all the four of classical virtues, σωφροσύνη, φρόνησις, δικαιοσύνη καὶ ἀνδρεία.<sup>235</sup>

The image of God as a warrior lets us perceive that God’s ultimate will is to protect the order and harmony in the world; therefore, he fights against those who wish to destroy it (chaps. 11-19). 5:17-23 describes a poignant scene of God’s fight against evil. His military force consists of his own qualities<sup>236</sup> and the force of the creation. 5:17-20a shows God garbing oneself in his properties that serve as weapons, whereas 5:20b-23b is a beautiful image of God’s arming the cosmos:

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<sup>231</sup> We understand 6:4 as referring to the earth viewed as a kingdom, which is, nevertheless, ruled by God. We take into account the context (6:1-3) that speaks of the *judges of the earth* and the power given to the kings, and 6:3 that forewarns the kings to rule righteously because their rule will be examined by God; see Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 152-153. Moreover, we note that the kingship of man is emphasized from the beginning. Nevertheless, in the image of man’s kingship there appears the eschatological implication: righteous rule leads to everlasting life (cf. 3:7; 6:21). Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 261, understands *the righteous* under the term *servants of God* in 6:3-4, and connects it with 5:16 where the righteous gets a crown as a reward. However, he does not seem to take into consideration that the text emphasizes the idea of judgment in relation to unjust rule (6:1-4). Thus, it is probably the wicked that is warned, who does not walk on the path of God (cf. 2:12-20; 5:6-13).

<sup>232</sup> Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 242. The background of the presentation of God and later of the just man is the Hellenistic kingly ideal; for the details see Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 74-80.

<sup>233</sup> Justice, power, kindness and benevolence.

<sup>234</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 75, notes that the virtues, δύναμις, ἐπιειχία and φιλόανθρωπος, and their ordering is the same as that found in the Letter of Aristeas, 206-208; this “does indicate his [Wis’] dependence upon the genre of kingship tracts.”

<sup>235</sup> Temperance, prudence, justice and courage. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 76, sees an influence of Hellenistic anthropology here, the “analytic reasoning of the kingship tracts, in which every wise man is looked upon as being educated by the practice of an orderly array of virtues.”

<sup>236</sup> Michael Kolarcik, *The Ambiguity of Death in the Book of Wisdom 1-6: A Study of Literary Structure and Interpretation*, AnBib 127 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1991), 106: by means of analogy Wis personifies the divine qualities (5:17-20); “each weapon of a hoplite is compared to a divine attribute. . . . The analogy is an adaptation of Isa 59:17-19. The author has tightened the similar analogy by comparing divine zeal with the entire armor of a hoplite.” See also Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 127.

λήμψεται πανοπλίαν τόν ζῆλον αὐτοῦ  
 καὶ ὀπλοποιήσῃ τὴν κτίσιν εἰς ἄμυναν ἐχθρῶν  
 ἐνδύσεται θώρακα δικαιοσύνην  
 καὶ περιθήσεται κόρυθα κρίσιν ἀνυπόκριτον  
 λήμψεται ἀσπίδα ἀκαταμάχητον ὁσιότητα  
 ὅξυνεῖ δὲ ἀπότομον ὀργὴν εἰς ῥομφαίαν  
 συνεκπολεμήσῃ δὲ αὐτῷ ὁ κόσμος ἐπὶ τοὺς παράφρονas  
     πορεύονται εὖστοχοι βολίδες ἀστραπῶν  
     καὶ ὡς ἀπὸ εὐκύκλου τόξου τῶν νεφῶν ἐπὶ σκοπὸν ἀλοῦνται  
     καὶ ἐκ πετροβόλου θυμοῦ πλήρεις ῥιφήσονται χάλαζαι  
     ἀγανακτήσῃ κατ' αὐτῶν ὕδωρ θαλάσσης  
     ποταμοὶ δὲ συγκλύσουσιν ἀποτόμως  
     ἀντιστήσεται αὐτοῖς πνεῦμα δυνάμεως  
     καὶ ὡς λαῖλαψ ἐκλικμήσῃ αὐτούς<sup>237</sup> (5:17-23).

The image of the transcendent God, who orders the world indirectly through his wisdom (see 1:6c-7; also 9:1b-2a; 12:1), looks like changing for a moment. 5:17-23 seems to depict God approaching the cosmos. God puts on his zeal, righteousness, justice, holiness and his wrath,<sup>238</sup> and sets out to defeat his enemies and “winnow away” all the evil from earth.<sup>239</sup> However, in 5:21-23 we can see that the cosmos is the medium of God’s fight; it is the armed cosmos that acts as the executor of God’s attack. And if we look at it more carefully, we can see that the qualities of God, righteousness, zeal, justice, etc. also stand in between God and humankind, so we actually have the same transcendent God here, who is present in the cosmos through his

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<sup>237</sup> The Lord will take his zeal as his whole armor, and will arm all creation to repel his enemies; he will put on righteousness as a breastplate, and wear impartial justice as a helmet; he will take holiness as an invincible shield, and sharpen stern wrath for a sword, and creation will join with him to fight against his frenzied foes. Shafts of lightning will fly with true aim, and will leap from the clouds to the target, as from a well-drawn bow, and hailstones full of wrath will be hurled as from a catapult; the water of the sea will rage against them, and rivers will relentlessly overwhelm them; a mighty wind will rise against them, and like a tempest it will winnow them away.

<sup>238</sup> The OT image of God’s wrath was always combined with justice and mercy; see Gary S. Schogren, “Wrath,” *EDB*, 1392-1393. See Deborah’s story in Judg 4-5.

<sup>239</sup> God’s final battle against evil in 5:17-23 and the Exodus story in chaps. 11-19 reveal the metaphor of struggle as God overcomes the chaos in the world. For the metaphor of struggle; see Perdue, *Wisdom in Revolt*, 47-56.

manifestations. So, at the end this description does not change the view of the transcendent Creator; it only enhances the picture of his involvement in the fight for justice.

Describing the armor of God, the text also discloses who the opposition of God is: ἐνδύσεται θώρακα δικαιοσύνης καὶ περιθήσεται κόρυθα κρίσιν ἀνυπόκριτον (5:18). Righteousness and justice are God's helmet and breastplate; by implication, his enemies are unrighteousness and injustice. God's victory over his enemies is predicted by ἄσπίδα ἀκαταμάχητον in 5:19 that discloses the extent of God's power to protect his will.<sup>240</sup> His power supersedes that of his enemies.<sup>241</sup> His zeal emphasizes his fanatical involvement in the war against his enemies.<sup>242</sup> Reading 5:17-23 we come to see some other important issues that we discuss below. God's use of creation against evil implies the cosmological principle that the creation is good and always in harmony with its Creator.<sup>243</sup> Further, God's intervention in the world underlines his providence and saving will, as well as the link between the concepts of judgment, God as warrior and immortality.

The military function of the king is closely linked to that of his judging role that guarantees the order. 5:17-23 depicts both of these interrelated tasks: God appears as a warrior, but also as a judge. God winnows away the evil from the earth; this means that the order of creation is not only protected, but God punishes those who do not keep the laws.<sup>244</sup>

Here we have to mention that when describing the idea of judgment, we only highlight the points that are important aspects for our discussion on immortality; therefore, for the most part we deal with two questions: what is the meaning of judgment and what is the relation between judgment

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<sup>240</sup> Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 97: holiness "denotes here the absolute impeccability of God, rendering all argument against His decisions useless."

<sup>241</sup> Commenting on the power and providence of God, Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 138, says: "The 'diadem' of the high priest as intercessor thwarts the 'diadem' of Hades"; cf. 18:24-25; 1:13-14.

<sup>242</sup> We do not intend to discuss here whether this is an image of an end-time judgment related to a cosmic eschatological battle or only a picture of the fight between righteousness and evil. But probably not an end-time judgment when God initiates a Kingdom of God on earth, since Wis does not seem to have those expectations.

<sup>243</sup> Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 106: in 5:17 the author extends the idea of Isa 59:17-19 "into a principle of cosmology; namely, that the forces of nature are clearly on the side of God and justice against wickedness and foolishness."

<sup>244</sup> Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 98: in ὡς ἀπὸ εὐκύκλου τόξου (5:21b), "the reference seems to be to the rainbow, the token of divine mercy (Gen. 9.13), which now is turned into a weapon of destruction."

and immortality? The theme of judgment is already introduced in the first chapter; this means that it has enormous importance for the afterlife of the people. From the many references to judgment we select few verses now to define its meaning. Firstly, we shall look at 1:6c-7:

ὅτι τῶν νεφρῶν αὐτοῦ μάρτυς ὁ θεὸς  
καὶ τῆς καρδίας αὐτοῦ ἐπίσκοπος ἀληθῆς  
καὶ τῆς γλώσσης ἀκουστής  
ὅτι πνεῦμα κυρίου πεπλήρωκεν τὴν οἰκουμένην  
καὶ τὸ συνέχον τὰ πάντα  
γινῶσιν ἔχει φωνῆς<sup>245</sup>

God appears to be the judge of the universe, who, through his wisdom is the witness of all. The parallel between 1:6cde and 1:7 stresses God's omniscience and omnipresence through wisdom<sup>246</sup> and shows how God maintains the order through wisdom. Wisdom has knowledge of all (1:6-7), which refers to the knowledge of God and his works (8:1; 9:9-11, 16) and the structure of the cosmos (7:17-21), but it also refers to the knowledge of all good and evil in the world (1:4-7; 7:23). "Those who utter unrighteous things will not escape notice, and justice, when it punishes, will not pass them by" (1:8). Verses 1:6-10 depict the image of a trial.<sup>247</sup> God will examine the counsels of the ungodly (1:9ab). God is witness of νεφρος, καρδία, γλώσσα, the starting points of all good and evil a man can do. Οὔς ζηλώσεως in 1:10<sup>248</sup> expresses that God dismisses the wicked because of their failure to recognize him.<sup>249</sup> 1:11 then presents the consequences of grumbling: ἀναρεῖ ψυχὴν that is death. Similarly, 4:19 also presents that the final share of the wicked is death:<sup>250</sup>

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<sup>245</sup> Because God is witness of their inmost feelings, and a true observer of their hearts, and a hearer of their tongues. Because the spirit of the Lord has filled the world, and that which holds all things together knows what is said.

<sup>246</sup> See Vélchez and Eynikel, "Wisdom of Solomon," 971.

<sup>247</sup> See Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 64-66.

<sup>248</sup> McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 62 n. 27: "In describing God as 'the ear of jealousy' (1.10) our author clearly identifies God with personified 'justice' (δική) in 1.8." Cf. 5:17, where the adjective is used again in the context of judgment.

<sup>249</sup> Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 6: "God's jealousy is shown in O.T. (1) on behalf of the chosen people, (2) for His own honour. It is in the latter sense that God is spoken of here as jealous."

<sup>250</sup> See more about these texts and the concept of death at the discussion of different notions of death.

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ὅτι ῥήξει αὐτοὺς ἀφώνους πρηγεῖς  
καὶ σαλεύσει αὐτοὺς ἐκ θεμελίων  
καὶ ἕως ἐσχάτου χερσωθήνται  
καὶ ἔσονται ἐν ὀδύνῃ  
καὶ ἡ μνήμη αὐτῶν ἀπολεῖται<sup>251</sup>

Both 1:11 and 4:19 are set in the context of judgment; therefore we can see that the death of the wicked is a result of God's judgment. Grumbling destroys the soul because God convicts those whose mind and deeds are evil. We can say that God as judge is the point where one's fate is decided.

We encounter another connotation of judgment in 1:3-5:

σκολιοὶ γὰρ λογισμοὶ χωρίζουσιν ἀπὸ θεοῦ  
δοκιμαζομένη τε ἡ δύναμις ἐλέγχει τοὺς ἄφρονας  
ὅτι εἰς κακότεχνον ψυχὴν οὐκ εἰσελεύσεται σοφία  
οὐδὲ κατοικήσει ἐν σώματι κατάχρεω ἁμαρτίας  
ἅγιον γὰρ πνεῦμα παιδείας φεύζεται δόλον  
καὶ ἀπαναστήσεται ἀπὸ λογισμῶν ἄσυνέτων  
καὶ ἐλεγχθήσεται ἐπελθούσης ἀδικίας<sup>252</sup>

The judgment imposed on the wicked also means separation from God. We can consider a judgment on earth implied by the dynamic movement of wisdom that flees from the evil (1:1-5). The paralleling sentences of 1:4-5, which use verbs that indicate motion, underline that God distances himself from the foolish (1:3). The unrighteous, whose soul and body is affected by deceit and unrighteousness (2:1-20) cannot be in relation with God (1:3-11). "Perverse thoughts separate from God" because "wisdom will not enter an evil soul." This also sheds light on the

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<sup>251</sup> Because he will dash them speechless to the ground, and shake them from the foundations; they will be left utterly dry and barren, and they will suffer anguish, and the memory of them will perish.

<sup>252</sup> For perverse thoughts separate from God, and when his power is tested, it exposes the foolish; because wisdom will not enter an evil soul or dwell in a sinful body. For the holy spirit of discipline will flee from deceit and will depart from foolish thoughts and will condemn the coming unrighteousness [own trans.].

role of wisdom in salvation: one can be with God only if wisdom enters his soul. The separation expressed in 1:3 is yet a spiritual separation<sup>253</sup> from God on earth that leads to a final separation in ultimate death (1:16; 2:24).<sup>254</sup> We encounter another issue here: if we interpret wisdom's fleeing from the evil soul as judgment on earth, how do we interpret 7:27 which talks about wisdom entering the soul of the righteous? We assume that 7:27 could also be interpreted as judgment; thus, it would express that wisdom's presence exposes both good and evil. As a conclusion, God is not the judge of the unrighteous alone as it was implied by the previous texts; the righteous will also undergo a kind of judgment, and it is also possible that Wis implies a judgment for all at the moment of death.<sup>255</sup> There is, however, a difference between the connotations of judgment with regard to the righteous and the wicked. If Wis projects an examination for the righteous during their earthly life or at the moment of death, none of these will have the connotation of conviction, because judgment in the sense of condemnation will only be experienced by the wicked; and the consequence of this kind of judgment is death. This also leads to the conclusion that those who are not judged, in the sense of condemnation, will not die but share immortality. One final remark has to be made here: God's judgment seems to be final that is those whom he judges will share either immortality or ultimate death.

Looking back to the judgment scene in chap. 5, we recognize another element of the image of God as king, the element that we have mentioned but did not discuss yet. This is the image before the scene of God's fight, and it depicts God protecting the righteous:

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<sup>253</sup> Note that the term *spiritual separation* expresses our interpretation of the wicked's separation from God on earth; the term is not used in the text.

<sup>254</sup> See below at the discussion on death.

<sup>255</sup> There are several scholars that discuss questions related to the eschatological timetable of Wis, such as post-mortem or imminent judgment, individual or collective judgment, or the question how the post-mortem state of the righteous relates to judgment and exaltation. See among others, Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 88-90; Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life*, 87-89; McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 34-39; Puech, "The Book of Wisdom," 128-129; Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 86, 93-94. Since our focus is not on judgment, we do not intend to clarify these questions. Moreover, these questions express our eschatological categories, which the author does not seem to have been thought of or interested in clarifying; see Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life*, 88. Clarke, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 31, 42; Larcher, *Le Livre*, 2:397-398; Michael Kolarcik, "Sapiential Values and Apocalyptic Imagery in the Wisdom of Solomon," in Xeravits and Zsengellér, *Studies in the Book of Wisdom*, 30-35, who say that the author does not have an eschatological timetable; the emphasis is rather on the idea of the inevitability of judgment. Collins, "Apocalyptic Eschatology in Philosophical Dress," 100: "If the wicked simply cease to exist, . . . this apocalyptic judgment scene plays a role similar to that of the Myth of Er in Plato's *Republic*—it is a fable or myth, introduced to facilitate the discussion."



ὅτι

τῇ δεξιᾷ

σκεπάσει

αὐτοὺς

καὶ

τῷ βραχίονι

ὑπερασπιεῖ

αὐτῶν<sup>256</sup> (5:16cd).

This parallel underlines that God is a loving and benevolent king. His war against his enemies is for the maintenance of order and justice. The perception of God as a warrior and judge, who protects his people and restores the order, reflects not only God's saving will, but the surety of immortality for those who are *in his hand*.<sup>257</sup> The metaphor of the hand of God, of course, involves more, but at this point we only like to stress the loving care in the image of God as king. God's providence and love arises from the principle of creation that God created all for living (1:14).<sup>258</sup> 11:24-26 describes this beautifully:

ἀγαπᾷς γὰρ τὰ ὄντα πάντα

καὶ οὐδὲν βδελύσσει ὧν ἐποίησας

οὐδὲ γὰρ ἂν μισῶν τι κατεσκεύασας

πῶς δὲ διέμεινεν ἂν τι εἰ μὴ σὺ ἠθέλησας

ἢ τὸ μὴ κληθὲν ὑπὸ σοῦ διετηρήθη

φείδῃ δὲ πάντων

ὅτι σὰ ἐστίν

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<sup>256</sup> Because with his right hand he will cover them, and with his arm he will shield them.

<sup>257</sup> "δεξιός," BDAG, ad loc.: the right hand is related to the power of God (cf. Is 63:12).

<sup>258</sup> Gilbert, "The Origins," 180, also says that "the Lord punished the guilty in so mild a way . . . [because] the Lord was waiting for the sinners' conversion (Wis 11:24; 12:2, 10). Even Israel was not excluded from his pedagogy." Gilbert claims that we have to understand the Egyptian plagues "through a theology of creation and that this one implies a cosmology" ("The Origins," 180). On this subject, see also McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 30-33; Clarke, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 79; Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 128.

δέσποτα φιλόψυχε<sup>259</sup>

These verses link the images of the creator and the king, and summarize what we have said about God as king and creator. He is the creator and the owner of the creation. He is proclaimed the lord of all, who alone has the power to create and preserve the creation.<sup>260</sup> And finally, he is a loving king, whose will upholds the immortal life of the world and whose providence extends to the whole creation.

The context of these verses also reflects on the image of God as judge. God punishes the unrighteous gradually,<sup>261</sup> so that they might have a chance to repent (11:20-26; 12:1-22). It is wisdom that mediates God's love and mercy towards creation (7:23; chap. 10).<sup>262</sup> She is called φιλόανθρωπον πνεῦμα σοφία<sup>263</sup> in 1:6a, which means that she displays loving kindness and benevolent affection towards humanity.<sup>264</sup> Φιλανθρωπία was one of the qualities recommended

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<sup>259</sup> For you love all things that exist, and detest none of the things that you have made, for you would not have made anything if you had hated it. How would anything have endured if you had not willed it? Or how would anything not called forth by you have been preserved? You spare all things, for they are yours, O Lord, you who love the living.

<sup>260</sup> McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 42, accepts that Wis betrays "some form of Platonic dualism" in 11:26-12:1 as well as in 8:19-20 and 9:15, and explains 11:26-12:1 against this background: God "wishes to spare all (φείδῃ δὲ πάντων 11.26), because of that imperishable element [in the cosmos] which is his own. This not only makes sense of the claim in 2.23 that man was created for immortality, but it attempts to ground the character of mercy, understood by Jews as an attribute of God, upon the first principles attached to the remote Supreme Deity of philosophy" (43). Despite this, we should keep in mind that Wis emphasizes—in the actual verses also—that man only acquires wisdom and immortality if he asks for (7:7); there is no inherent wisdom and immortality in people. 11:26-12:1 underline the love of God, who corrects everyone through his wisdom.

<sup>261</sup> The first chapter shows how the unrighteous' separation from God takes place step by step. The separation of the unrighteous from God develops on two levels: while the unrighteous act, God also acts. The unrighteous has perverse thoughts, hearts, tongues (1:3a, 4), lack of goodness and sincerity of heart (1:1). The unrighteous utters grumbling (1:6, 8, 8b, 10b, 11). The unrighteous makes lawless deeds (1:9c), "pined away" and made covenant with death (1:16). Meanwhile God is witness of thoughts, heart, and tongues (1:6cde). "An inquiry will be made" (1:9a). "A report of his [the wicked's] words will come to the Lord" (1:9b). God convicts him (1:9c). God destroys his soul (1:11d). The unrighteous goes to Hades (1:16d). This pattern is parallel to 2:12-20, which also shows the separation from God starting from grumbling and ending in killing the righteous and pact with the evil. This scheme shows that the separation of the wicked from God is a process, which leads to a final separation, and it also shows that God executes his judgment only at the final stage of the wicked's involvement with evil that is their pact with death.

<sup>262</sup> See McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 131, also 89.

<sup>263</sup> Wisdom is a kindly spirit.

<sup>264</sup> See "φιλόανθρωπία," and "φιλόανθρωπος," *BDAG*, ad loc. Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 43: This is "a faint imitation of the Middle Stoic doctrine of *philanthrōpia*, or 'humanity,' which is fully elaborated in Philo."

for a king.<sup>265</sup> The image of God comprises this quality as well; God is a loving, benevolent king.<sup>266</sup> “Human *philanthrōpia* imitates that of the gods.”<sup>267</sup> The quality appears in 12:19 again and shows that the Exodus event has ethical implication with regard to the righteous as well: by giving space for repentance to the wicked “God wished to provide a model lesson for his beloved people in order to teach them that they should practice humanity.”<sup>268</sup> This implies that the virtues of God have to be acquired by everyone. If we read 1:6b together with 1:6a, the general idea of philanthropy becomes more nuanced: wisdom loves humanity, therefore she will not acquit those who are blaspheming. This takes us to the relation between mercy or good will, justice and righteousness. The ideal of justice was paired with righteousness, kindness and truth, righteousness with equity, in the Ancient Near East, thus showing them as deeply related ideas.<sup>269</sup> God is righteous; therefore, he must act according to his own laws, saving the righteous and punishing the wicked.<sup>270</sup> God is just; therefore, he judges “small and great” (6:7ff). God’s judgment falls severely on those who did not use rightly the power they received from him (6:3-5). Wisdom is loving, but also righteous; therefore she cannot “abide” in unrighteousness (1:5-6). Consequently, mercy goes together with righteousness.<sup>271</sup> The explanation behind God’s mercy and righteousness is the act of creation. God created the world, and his will is to save all, but being righteous, he “must uphold the moral order and, therefore, he must judge and punish human sinfulness.”<sup>272</sup> However, he is willing to wait for the repentance of the wicked until the

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<sup>265</sup> Annie Jaubert, *La notion d’alliance dans le judaïsme aux abords de l’ère chrétienne*, PatSor 6 (Paris: Seuil, 1963), 364, notes that this was a key term in Hellenistic ethic; adopted by the Hellenistic Judaism, it referred to the “gracious benevolence, especially on the part of a king to his subjects” [own trans.].

<sup>266</sup> See U. Luck, “*Philanthrōpia*, *philanthrōpōs*,” *TDNT*, 1261.

<sup>267</sup> Luck, *TDNT*, 1261. Philo writes that the love of God goes together with the love of man; see Philo, *Decal.* 108-110.

<sup>268</sup> Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 243.

<sup>269</sup> As noted by Moshe Weinfeld, “‘Justice and Righteousness’ (משפט וצדקה): The Expression and Its Meaning,” in *Justice and Righteousness: Biblical Themes and Their Influence*, ed. Henning Graf Reventlow and Yair Hoffman, JSOTSup 137 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 228-246.

<sup>270</sup> McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 51.

<sup>271</sup> McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 50, calls mercy “synonymous with God’s power,” and also claims that “God’s restraint of power and demonstrations of mercy are the main indicators of the real extent of his power” (49).

<sup>272</sup> McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 30; see also 30-53.

last moment. The act of creation discloses God's power; this power implies power to judge, but also power to have mercy:<sup>273</sup>

ἡ γὰρ ἰσχὺς σου δικαιοσύνης ἀρχή  
καὶ τὸ πάντων σε δεσπόζειν πάντων φείδεσθαι σε ποιεῖ<sup>274</sup> (12:16).

A small note on 3:14 before discussing the last component of the metaphor God as king: this verse says that the eunuch will receive “a place of great delight in the temple of the Lord.” If we connect this to the royal metaphor, we can say that God as king exercises his priestly function here that is maintaining the cultic order in the world by placing the eunuch in the temple of the Kingdom of God<sup>275</sup> instead of the wicked.<sup>276</sup>

We have left aside a most interesting property of the source domain king: prosperity and fertility. This element is also mapped into the metaphor of God as king. The King provides manna (16:20-26; 19:21) and water (11:4) for people in need. The gifts given through wisdom in the desert provide immortality to the righteous.<sup>277</sup> Other examples of this metaphor we find in the sections about the barren woman and the eunuch, again with eschatological connotation.

ὅτι μακαρία στεῖρα ἡ ἀμίαντος  
ἥτις οὐκ ἔγνω κοίτην ἐν παραπτώματι  
ἔξει καρπὸν ἐν ἐπισκοπῇ ψυχῶν<sup>278</sup> (3:13).

The context contrasts the life and fate of the eunuch and barren woman with that of the wicked. Although the eunuch and the barren woman are fruitless, they are undefiled. As a result, the

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<sup>273</sup> For this latter, see Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 7, 231; Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 129; Wright, “Wisdom,” 564-565; Johannes Fichtner, *Weisheit Salomos*, HAT2/6 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1938), 47.

<sup>274</sup> For your strength is the source of righteousness, and your sovereignty over all causes you to spare all.

<sup>275</sup> Samuel Cheon, “Three Characters in the Wisdom of Solomon 3-4,” *JSP* 12 (2001): 109: “This alludes to Isa. 56.5, which shows that the eunuch will receive a monument and a name in the temple of the Lord. . . . [thus] be highly exalted in the heavenly house of God.”

<sup>276</sup> Note that Wis does not emphasize cultic aspects: there is no ritual needed to receive wisdom (McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 107), and Law probably signifies law in general rather than the Torah.

<sup>277</sup> These metaphors will be discussed in detail together with the idea of immortality as presence and destination.

<sup>278</sup> For blessed is the barren woman who is undefiled, who has not entered into a sinful union; she will have fruit when God examines souls.

eunuch is promised a special reward (3:14), while the barren woman is promised fruits at the time of judgment. On the contrary, the wicked has children and lives life to the full (3:16; 2:6-9), but his life is in vain and he has no hope (3:11-12, 16-19).

As it was said, one of the functions of the king was to assure the prosperity and fertility of the nation. God is acting out this function of the king when he is giving fruits to the barren woman. The barren woman cannot have children in her earthly life, but a blameless life leads to spiritual fruits. So we realize that the agrarian metaphor is not used to perceive earthly life here, but it is used to understand spiritual life. In fact we have two metaphorical mappings here. God is perceived as king, who exercises his duty in maintaining prosperity and fertility; this is then combined with an agrarian metaphor that views people and their lives in terms of plants and land. The barren woman is seen as a plant that bears no fruits. A similar metaphor describes the fruitfulness of the wicked in 4:3-5:

πολύγονον δὲ ἀσεβῶν πλῆθος οὐ χρησιμεύσει

καὶ ἐκ νόθων μοσχευμάτων οὐ δώσει

ρίζαν

εἰς βάθος

οὐδὲ

ἀσφαλῇ

βάσιν

ἐδράσει

κἂν γὰρ ἐν κλάδοις πρὸς καιρὸν ἀναθάλη

ἐπισφαλῶς βεβηκότα

ὑπὸ ἀνέμου σαλευθήσεται

καὶ

ὑπὸ βίας ἀνέμων ἐκριζωθήσεται

περικλασθήσονται κλῶνες ἀτέλεστοι

καὶ ὁ καρπὸς αὐτῶν ἄχρηστος

ἄωρος

εἰς βρῶσιν

καὶ

εἰς οὐθὲν

This latter image is more detailed; the elements of the metaphor are mentioned carefully. This precision comes to emphasize that the tree in question is good for nothing. From roots to fruits this tree is weak and useless.<sup>280</sup> The chiasms (3bc, 5cd) and the parallel (4bc) emphasize how insecure the seedlings of the unrighteous are. The way the wicked live their life leads to their destruction. On the contrary, the fruitlessness of the barren woman leads to happiness. Μακαρία<sup>281</sup> implies eschatological reward for the barren woman (3:13)<sup>282</sup> in contrast with the ἐπικατάρατος that means condemnation by God (3:12).<sup>283</sup> The key sentence that explains these different fates is 3:15:

ἀγαθῶν γὰρ πόνων

καρπὸς

εὐκλεής

καὶ

ἀδιάπτωτος

ἡ ῥίζα

τῆς φρονήσεως<sup>284</sup>

Similarly to the metaphor that views people as plants, here people's life is viewed as a plant.<sup>285</sup> This can be an extension of the metaphor that views people as plants. The elements of the plants are mapped into the domain life; thus certain properties of personal life are viewed as fruits and root. To be more precise, the text itself exhibits the mapping and shows both target and source concept by linking fruit to good labour and root to understanding. But the metaphor that views

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<sup>279</sup> But the prolific brood of the ungodly will be of no use, and none of their illegitimate seedlings will strike a deep root or take a firm hold. For even if they put forth boughs for a while, standing insecurely they will be shaken by the wind, and by the violence of the winds they will be uprooted. The branches will be broken off unaccomplished, and their fruit will be useless, not ripe enough to eat, and good for nothing.

<sup>280</sup> Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 91-92.

<sup>281</sup> Blessed, happy.

<sup>282</sup> And also for the eunuch; see 3:14.

<sup>283</sup> "ἐπικατάρατος," ANLEX, ad loc.

<sup>284</sup> For the fruit of good labors is renowned, and the root of understanding does not fail.

<sup>285</sup> Our insights are based on the description of the metaphor PEOPLE ARE PLANTS by Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 6, 12-14; however, we extend the explanation in order to appropriate it to the Wis text.

life in terms of a plant also helps us order the elements of life. Since the basis of the plant is root and the product is fruit, fruit must stand for the results of one's life, whereas root defines the causes or principles on which one's life is based. The metaphorical construction tells us that it is the roots that define the fruits. Thus, we understand that one's principles define the results of his life. The chiasm emphasizes that all the elements or properties of life are linked together: the fruits are linked to the roots, and good labour to understanding. 3:15 mentions one principle that is infallible, φρόνησις.<sup>286</sup> Wisdom is the root that makes one's life good and useful; without wisdom everything is useless and accursed. Those who have wisdom will live forever because knowledge brought by wisdom is ῥίζα ἀθανασίας<sup>287</sup> (15:3),<sup>288</sup> the root that secures firm hold and good fruits. The wicked, whose roots are insecure, will perish (3:12, 16; 4:3) because their roots does not take hold in wisdom or, in other words, in the life of God.<sup>289</sup> 4:19 describes the final fate of the wicked in terms of agrarian metaphor again: καὶ ἕως ἐσχάτου χερσωθήνται that means that they will be made dry and barren. It is exciting to sense the links the text makes between different images. God is the king who guarantees prosperity, and if the wicked are left dry and barren, it means that they will be totally separated from God because distance from God means that they are lacking the source that makes them live. Therefore being barren will have the connotation of both separation from God and ultimate death, while having the roots of understanding implies relationship with God that results in the fruits of immortality.

### 2.1.1.3 God the Father

Besides being described as the creator and king of the earth, God is also seen the father of the righteous.<sup>290</sup> The *family metaphor* displays a different set of relationship between the righteous

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<sup>286</sup> Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 78: "The verse appears to be a variation of 1.15 'For righteousness is immortal' and 4.1. 'for there is immortality in its remembrance.'"

<sup>287</sup> The root of immortality.

<sup>288</sup> See the exegesis at the chapter of knowledge.

<sup>289</sup> Cf. Larcher, *Le Livre*, 1:308-309, who interprets τέκνα μοιχῶν (children of adulterers) in 3:16 as children born of adultery from mixed marriages, i.e. those who will not inherit from their fathers opposite to the legitimate children. Therefore, the term serves as metaphor for those who are unfaithful to God and cannot inherit the covenant promises.

<sup>290</sup> Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 106, observes that one of the few instances where God is addressed as Father in pre-Christian Jewish literature is found in Wis 14:3. The other occurrences are Sir 23:1; 51:10; Isa 64:8. He draws the conclusion that "what this may suggest is that this sort of address first came to prominence in Wisdom literature."

and God that maps the characteristics and relations implied by human family into the relation between the righteous and God. The basic components of human family are parent and child, among which there is a special bond or kinship. The concept of family also implies several characteristics and behaviour that arise from the relationship between parent and child. A father takes care of his children, provides all the necessary things for them, and protects them. The child in return has to be obedient and honour the parents.<sup>291</sup> The children inherit the characteristics of the father. Not only are their identity and status, but their behaviour and actions as well are defined by the family they are born into.<sup>292</sup>

Similarly to the royal metaphor, the family metaphor defines something related to the divine realm in human terms; more exactly it perceives the relationship between the righteous and God in terms of human relationship. The affiliation with God is understood in many ways, and via different metaphors in Wis. All these metaphors disclose different aspects of their relationship. If Wis uses the family metaphor, it means that it adds something special to the description of the relationship between God and the righteous that was not exhibited in the other metaphors.

But let us look at the texts, after which we describe the mapping.

ἐπαγγέλλεται

γινῶσιν ἔχειν θεοῦ

καὶ

παῖδα κυρίου ἑαυτὸν

ὀνομάζει<sup>293</sup> (2:13).

The righteous is called the child of God.<sup>294</sup> The idea of God as father and the righteous as his child is frequent in the history of religion.<sup>295</sup> What we can see here is that it is given only to the

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<sup>291</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 166-168, sums up the main features of the ancient Mediterranean concept of family, which saw the family functioning as basic social structure: the father was the head of the family. Through birth a person became part of a family. Birth determined identity and status. Being born into a family did not only meant privileges, but also responsibilities. The relationship between father and son was defined by these two poles: a father cared for his child, who in return obeyed and honoured the father. Since the parents were often regarded as God's agents, not being obedient to them was equal to not honouring God.

<sup>292</sup> Cf. van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 166-168.

<sup>293</sup> He professes to have knowledge of God, and calls himself a child of the Lord.



righteous (2:13b, 18a; 11:10; 14:3; 18:13; 19:6) and it is based on a special condition that is communion with wisdom (7:14, 27; 9:6).<sup>296</sup> The chiasmus links the status of being the child of God with the knowledge of God. Wisdom initiates the righteous into the knowledge of God by disclosing the mysteries of God (2:22-23).<sup>297</sup> This is “saving” knowledge due to which the righteous becomes the child of God.<sup>298</sup> Childhood in this family will not be an ordinary childhood, but a special one where the believer is the child of God. It implies a new, spiritual existence and identity in the realm of God. Since that moment the righteous lives in two realms; he is still living on earth, but starts living spiritually in the realm of God. LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE is combined with the family metaphor. This latter is based on the Great Chain Metaphor,<sup>299</sup> and it expresses the relations of higher level entities (relation with God) in terms of lower level entities (childhood, family). Since the Great Chain Metaphor will be analysed below where we elaborate it

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<sup>294</sup> The picture here is based chiefly on the fourth servant poem in Isa 52:12 and some passages earlier and later in Isaiah. According to Winston, although the meaning of child for παῖς is “fixed” by 2:16d and 2:18a, “this may be due to our author’s misunderstanding of the LXX’s oscillation between *pais* [which means both child and servant] and *doulos* [servant]” (*The Wisdom of Solomon*, 120). Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 66, notes that the two terms are used interchangeably in 9:4-7 and 12:19-25. I think that the use of *child* cannot be based on misunderstanding alone; it exactly fits the cosmology of our author where the righteous becomes the child of God who protects him with his hand and arm (3:1; 5:16). So, although in 9:4-5 παῖς may be equivalent to *servant* as the parallel use of δοῦλος shows, we cannot state that in all the cases παῖς has the meaning of servant. The author uses υἱός, too, in 5:5; 9:5, 7; 12:19, 21; 18:13. Further, the same father-child image is used in 11:10 and 19:6, which can then be compared to the OT usage of *son* for Israel. Silvana Manfredi, “The Trial of the Righteous in Wis 5:1-14 (1-7) and in the Prophetic Traditions,” in Passaro and Bellia, *The Book of Wisdom in Modern Research*, 173, however, notes: “If in the Old Testament the term ‘son’ stands for the people, the interpretation according to which the expression in Wisdom is attributed to the just man becomes credible, but then the just man designates not a particular individual but rather the whole body of the believing people.”

<sup>295</sup> Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 58. Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 265-266: “The invocation of the deity as ‘Father’ was common in Greek literature from Homer on.” See Seeley, “Narrative, the Righteous Man and the Philosopher,” 72-73. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 109, notes that the late Jewish writings were also concerned with the theme of God as Father and the righteous as child. Cf. Sir 23:1. For this topic, see Jaubert, *La notion d’alliance*, 351-353.

<sup>296</sup> Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 58, notes the many variations of this idea: in some religions “the fact of man’s being a child of God is seen as something perfectly obvious, as simply given,” in others “as a relationship which is shared only by particularly favoured men”—like Israel or the kings (58 n. 4)—, or, in other variations, it “is given by God only on special conditions.” What we see in Wis 2:13, 16, 18 is the latter (see Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 58 n. 5). See also Greg Schmidt Goering, “Election and Knowledge in the Wisdom of Solomon,” in Xeravits and Zsengellér, *Studies in the Book of Wisdom*, 163-182, who argues that the elect of Wis are all that receive divine knowledge through wisdom.

<sup>297</sup> See the section on knowledge.

<sup>298</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 141.

<sup>299</sup> I base my understanding on the insights of Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*.

in relation with immortality, at the moment we are content with saying that the special relation of the righteous with God is expressed in terms of human relationships. The true identity of the righteous is his being the child of God. His new existence is the one that shapes his character and behaviour. This new existence also results in a different way of living (2:12-16). 2:12 describes the attitude of the wicked towards the righteous; the sight of the righteous is a burden for the wicked because of their different belief and way of life (2:15ff); the righteous' mode of living actually accuses the wicked. This different view of life is expressed in 2:16cd:

μακαρίζει ἔσχατα δικαίων  
καὶ ἀλαζονεύεται πατέρα θεόν<sup>300</sup>

Their different way of life is the result of their new existence. Μακαρίζει ἔσχατα δικαίων expresses that the end of the righteous is happy because he will not die (3:1ff). On the contrary, the end of the wicked is called χαλεπὰ, hard (3:19) that implies total destruction (4:19). Thus the metaphor that views the righteous as the child of God implies eschatological connotation. The new existence in the family of God implies that the righteous lives forever (5:15). The metaphor that views God as father and the righteous as child expresses the relational feature of the concept of immortality. Immortality becomes the quality of the kinship between God and men.<sup>301</sup>

We have described that the righteous receives a new, eternal spiritual existence through wisdom as the child of God, but how is immortality transferred to the righteous; how can he get eternal life? The answer lies in the properties of the family domain.

εἰ γὰρ ἐστὶν ὁ δίκαιος υἱὸς θεοῦ  
ἀντιλήμνεται αὐτοῦ  
καὶ  
ρύσεται αὐτὸν ἐκ χειρὸς ἀνθεστηκότων<sup>302</sup> (2:18).

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<sup>300</sup> He calls the last end of the righteous happy, and boasts that God is his father.

<sup>301</sup> Annette M. Böckler, "Unser Vater," in *Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Pierre van Hecke, BETL 187 (Leuven: Leuven University Press; Leuven: Peeters, 2005), 249-261, notes that the father metaphor points to mutuality in the relationship between God and men.

<sup>302</sup> For if the righteous man is God's child, he will help him, and will deliver him from the hand of his adversaries.

God as the father of the righteous protects his children and cares for them, and his protection means protection from death (4:10, 11, 14). We can see the aspect of protection implied by many other metaphors as well, but the family metaphor implies a unique feature: the children *inherit* the characteristics of their father. This implies a very important thing with regard to immortality: since God is a father who has eternal life (2:23; 13:1), his children will also have life (1:1, 15; 3:1-9; 4:7-15; 5:15); moreover, they also share the qualities of this life, namely, eternity (5:15). Therefore they do not die.

There is another conclusion we can draw from the family metaphor. The righteous is called the child of God and he receives a new existence while still living on earth. The message we have here is that immortality is in progress on earth. The righteous that becomes part of the spiritual realm starts an immortal existence in his earthly life.

In order to see more clearly how the properties of the earthly family domain are mapped into the spiritual family of God, we describe the mapping as follows:

Source: earthly family	Target: spiritual bond with God
father	God
child	the righteous
existence on earth	existence in the realm of God
protection	protection from death
earthly life	eternal life
identity, characteristics	identity, characteristics
and behaviour shaped by earthly father	and behaviour shaped by God

We have one more passage to discuss that combines more metaphors and it also sums up what the family metaphor implies. In 5:5 the righteous is again called child of God:

πῶς κατελογίσθη  
ἐν υἱοῖς θεοῦ  
καὶ

ἐν ἁγίοις  
ὁ κληῖρος αὐτοῦ ἐστίν<sup>303</sup>

This time the eschatological connotation is more explicit due to the context of the verse. The context describes the judgment of the wicked that are facing the righteous after death (4:19-5:2).<sup>304</sup> This chiasmus is a painful question of the unrighteous, who now realize that they misunderstood the life and death of the righteous as well as their own life and death.<sup>305</sup> Οἱ ἄφρονες τὸν βίον αὐτοῦ ἐλογισάμεθα μανίαν καὶ τὴν τελευτὴν αὐτοῦ ἄτιμον<sup>306</sup> in 5:4 tells all about their former misunderstanding and present repentance. As a parallel is drawn between the status of the righteous as the child of God and his presence among the saints,<sup>307</sup> the status of the righteous is extended: he is the child of God that was exalted. The righteous is elevated to live among the saints in the Kingdom of God (cf. 3:1-9; 4:10, 11, 14).<sup>308</sup> Although we also find the idea that the righteous is numbered among the holy ones already on earth (4:15; 18:9),<sup>309</sup> that emphasizes that immortality is in progress on earth, the judgment scene in 5:5 clearly refers to the post mortem state of the righteous. We can see more metaphors linked here: DIVINE IS UP, LIFE IS PRESENCE IN THE FAMILY OF GOD and IMMORTALITY IS UP. The domain of the holy ones and saints is up in the kingdom of God (10:10) where eternity is (3:8; 5:15). Reaching the domain of the saints means immortality. The righteous who becomes the child of God is spiritually part of the divine realm on earth, and after his death he is elevated to the Kingdom of God. We can now connect the reference to the Kingdom of God in 10:10 to the idea of the righteous' being elevated among the holy ones in 5:5. Reese also links them and says that "the

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<sup>303</sup> Why have they been numbered among the children of God? And why is their lot among the saints?

<sup>304</sup> See more about this scene below at the chapter about the kingship of the righteous.

<sup>305</sup> See how the wicked understood life and death at section on anthropology.

<sup>306</sup> Fools that we were! We thought that their lives were madness and that their end was without honor.

<sup>307</sup> Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 91: "Analogous to the register of the inhabitants of the theocratic community (Ps. 69.29) a register is pictured here as existing in the eternal world." Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life*, 60: "In his life, he [the righteous] had claimed to be God's son (2:13, 16, 18); now the truth of this claim is seen in his EXALTATION into the ranks of 'the sons of God,' the angelic attendants in the court of the heavenly king."

<sup>308</sup> The reference here is to the angels; see Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 125. Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 91, has the opinion that ἐν υἱοῖς θεοῦ refers to the "'saints' generally, as in Hos. 2:1."

<sup>309</sup> McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 106: "The use of ὅσιος in Wisdom often carries the implication of being chosen by God, i.e. of election (4.15, 10.15), and Larcher is right, therefore, to suggest that there may be a reference here to the eschatological judgement, particularly in the light of 6.10b where the kings seem to be required to give an answer." Cf. Larcher, *Le Livre*, 2:415.

flashback clarifies the sense of 10.10, and shows that the substantive ‘holy’ is to be translated by the masculine rather than the neuter . . . For the Sage, eternal life is not a thing but an association with the heavenly court”<sup>310</sup> that is eternal communion with God and his angels. A final remark related to the family metaphor is that the relationship between God as the father and the righteous as the child is an eternal relationship. Reading it in the context of 5:15 (δίκαιοι δὲ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα ζῶσιν καὶ ἐν κυρίῳ ὁ μισθὸς αὐτῶν καὶ ἡ φροντὶς αὐτῶν παρὰ ὑψίστῳ),<sup>311</sup> 5:5 expresses that the righteous has entered the family of God and he will remain part of it eternally.

To conclude, God, who created the whole world for living, who is the king and judge of the world, is also the father of the righteous. The difference in the relations the righteous and the wicked have with God is emphasized in 11:10:

τούτους μὲν γὰρ ὡς πατὴρ νοουθετῶν ἐδοκίμασας  
ἐκείνους δὲ ὡς ἀπότομος βασιλεὺς καταδικάζων ἐξήτασας<sup>312</sup>

The parallel describes the attitude of God towards the righteous and the wicked resulting from his relationship with them. While the righteous are only warned by God that is the sign of his protection and saving, the wicked are condemned. These two types of attitude is the consequence or, better say, property of the two types of relationship human beings can have with God. God is the father of the righteous; therefore his test is only a warning for the righteous. On the contrary, the wicked are not warned but they are condemned by God. So the verse also forecasts the future of the righteous and the wicked: one is saved, while the other is condemned. However, we should not forget one thing: the fact that God is the father of the righteous does not annul his role as the king of the righteous. These two roles compose a unit perceiving God as a father who is also a king; as a result of this conception of God, the righteous will be in relation with both the

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<sup>310</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 125. Reese understands flashback as “a short repetition of a significant word or group of words or distinctive idea in two different parts of Wis. In general, they serve to make the specific examples from sacred history that appear in the last part of the book types of man’s final destiny” (*Hellenistic Influence*, 124). He also notes that this was one of the techniques of Hellenistic historiography “for unifying a work” (*Hellenistic Influence*, 123-124).

<sup>311</sup> See the discussion on this verse below.

<sup>312</sup> For you tested them as a parent does in warning, but you examined the ungodly as a stern king does in condemnation.

Father and the King. The righteous is elevated among the saints (5:15)<sup>313</sup> that is “he has been invested with high authority.”<sup>314</sup> He will be a king and judge (5:16ab, also 3:8ab). This is a metaphor we analyse later, but the answer to the question why the righteous can be a king lies here: he is in union with the King. 5:1-5 connects the authority of the righteous to judge with his status as the child of God. This also implies that those who only experience God’s kingship but are not in relation with the Father will not share immortality.

#### 2.1.1.4 God the Friend

Besides all the roles mentioned above, God is also the friend of the righteous.<sup>315</sup> We see a different type of relationship again in the friendship with God:

ἀνεκλιπῆς γὰρ θησαυρός ἐστὶν  
 ἀνθρώποις  
 ὃν οἱ κτηάμενοι  
 πρὸς θεὸν ἐστεύλαντο φιλίαν  
 διὰ τὰς ἐκ παιδείας δωρεὰς συσταθέντες<sup>316</sup> (7:14).

The chiasmic structure of 7:14ab links friendship with God to wisdom, pointing out that wisdom is “unfailing treasure,” among many things (7:7-9:18), because they who receive wisdom (8:18) “obtain friendship with God” (7:14, 27).<sup>317</sup> This metaphor also uses the Great Chain Metaphor to understand the divine in terms of human categories.

<sup>313</sup> Cf. Chrysostome Larcher, *Études sur le Livre de la Sagesse (EBib)* (Paris: Lecoffre, 1969), 320-321.

<sup>314</sup> Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life*, 60. Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life*, 60-61, also notes that “Jewish literature attributes just such ruling functions to the angels—in whose midst he [the righteous] stands.” The idea is similar to Jewish apocalyptic eschatology found in Daniel, 1 Enoch and Qumran; see Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 147; Patrick William Skehan, review of *Wijsheid, uit de grondtekst vertaald en uitgelegd*, by A. Drubbel, and *Le Livre de la Sagesse*, by E. Osty, *CBQ* 21 (1959): 525-527; Collins, “Cosmos and Salvation,” 330-337. On the divine assembly in Canaanite and Hebrew Literature, see George E. Wright, *The Old Testament Against Its Environment*, SBT 2 (Chicago: Regnery, 1950; repr., London: SCM, 1962), 30-41.

<sup>315</sup> Aristotle notes the friendship between a father and a son (*Eth. nic.* 8.11-12).

<sup>316</sup> For it is an unfailing treasure for mortals; those who get it obtain friendship with God, commended for the gifts that come from instruction.

<sup>317</sup> Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 188: “An ancient and widespread motif”; cf. Isa 41:8; 2 Chr 20:7, etc. Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 117, notes that the phrase *friends of God* is not found elsewhere in the Septuagint: “Perhaps this expression goes back to Greek philosophy.”

The ancient friendship<sup>318</sup> as a social category involved different people and qualities.<sup>319</sup> Moreover, although it had many overlaps, friendship in the Greco-Roman world<sup>320</sup> and Judaism was not identical.<sup>321</sup>

The most essential quality of friendship in the Greco-Roman world was *unity*.<sup>322</sup> This means thinking and acting in harmony (functionality).<sup>323</sup> To this *openness, frankness*<sup>324</sup> and *loyalty*<sup>325</sup> were associated.<sup>326</sup> A friend would always tell his opinion honestly, and listen to the other's opinion openly.<sup>327</sup> Unity also means to seek the interest of the other.<sup>328</sup> The opinion was, therefore, that real friendship develops with time,<sup>329</sup> since it involves *intimacy* and *confidence*.<sup>330</sup>

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<sup>318</sup> In describing the concept of friendship in Greco-Roman and Jewish world, I am following van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 360-362; Jan G. van der Watt, "'Working the Works of God': Identity and Behaviour in the Gospel of John," in *Paul, John, and Apocalyptic Eschatology: Studies in Honour of Martinus C. de Boer*, ed. Jan Krans et al., NovTSup 149 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 135-150; David Konstan, "Friendship, Frankness and Flattery," in *Friendship, Flattery, and Frankness of Speech: Studies on Friendship in the New Testament World*, ed. John T. Fitzgerald, NovTSup 82 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 7-19, which contain a good summary of ancient ethics.

<sup>319</sup> Konstan, "Friendship, Frankness and Flattery," 8.

<sup>320</sup> Friendship in the Greek and Roman world basically means the same; see Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 2:1006; van der Watt, "'Working the Works of God,'" 139 n. 15.

<sup>321</sup> G. Stählin, "Φίλος, philō, philía," *TDNT*, 1267: "the Greek view of friendship is an alien one in the OT world." Although we find certain forms of friendship in Judaism as well, in the sense of personal friend, friend of the family, best man, client, friend of the king, political supporter (e.g. 1 Sam 8:3-4; 18:1; 2 Sam 1:26; 2 Chr 19:2; 20:37); see Stählin, *TDNT*, 1267, who also notes that Sir 6:16-17 implies that only those who fear God find true friendship.

<sup>322</sup> See Cicero, *Amic.* 6.20; Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 9.6; cf. 1 Sam 18:1.

<sup>323</sup> Cicero, *Amic.* 17.61.

<sup>324</sup> William Klassen, "Παρησία in the Johannine Corpus," in Fitzgerald, *Friendship, Flattery, and Frankness of Speech*, 234, notes that in the LXX the context of παρησία is "the dwelling of God among the people, and Jews of the Greco-Roman world did not hesitate to attribute their παρησία to God's deliverance from Egypt. Παρησία connotes more than merely the freedom to speak; it refers to a general bearing towards life which involves assertiveness and the confidence that one lives under a covenant with a fundamentally gracious and benevolent God. This confidence is considered a gift given by that god." Klassen later ("Παρησία," 238) refers to Wis 5:1 where the confidence of the righteous is seen at the time of judgment.

<sup>325</sup> See the story of Jonathan and David (1 Sam 19:4-5; 20:32-34); Jonathan chooses to be loyal towards his friend David rather than towards his father Saul.

<sup>326</sup> See Konstan, "Friendship, Frankness and Flattery," 7-19, who discusses frankness in relation to friendship and flattery. For frankness and loyalty, see also Alfons Fürst, *Streit unter Freunden: Ideal und Realität in der Freundschaftslehre der Antike*, BzA 85 (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1996), 133-134, also 119; Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 2:1009-1010.

<sup>327</sup> Fürst, *Streit unter Freunden*, 35: true friendship did not know dispute, anger or covetousness. See also Fürst, *Streit unter Freunden*, 26-27.

<sup>328</sup> Cicero, *Amic.* 14.51; Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 9.8.9-10; see also Konstan, "Friendship, Frankness and Flattery," 16; cf. Ps 15:3; Sir 22:25.

<sup>329</sup> Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 8.3.9; cf. Sir 6:7.

<sup>330</sup> See Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 2:1010; cf. Sir 6:9; 22:22; 27:17.

*Sharing* is another essential element of friendship.<sup>331</sup> Those who are friends would share joy<sup>332</sup> and difficulties.<sup>333</sup> The extreme form of unity and sharing is to give up one's life for the friend.<sup>334</sup> Friends were usually of equal status,<sup>335</sup> and their obligations were mutual.<sup>336</sup> Similar ideas we find in the Jewish literature<sup>337</sup> with the difference that giving up one's life for the others was not common;<sup>338</sup> nevertheless, we find the act performed for the sake of the nation or fame.<sup>339</sup>

Aristotle speaks of three types of friendships at the basis of which are virtue/good, pleasure and utility.<sup>340</sup> Among these three the one based on virtue is "the perfect form of friendship";<sup>341</sup> this is the only one that is permanent<sup>342</sup> and noble.<sup>343</sup> Friends joined together by virtue have "one soul."<sup>344</sup> The friend is loved for himself, and not for pleasure or utility.<sup>345</sup> Aristotle says that friendship is essential in life; "it is a virtue."<sup>346</sup> Thus the idea of friendship is linked to ethics: friendship promotes beneficence, virtue and justice.<sup>347</sup> Friendship is "the greatest of external goods."<sup>348</sup> The Greco-Roman idea of friendship resembles the OT idea even in this aspect; only the good and the virtuous can be true friends. However, the OT mentions God as the basis of

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<sup>331</sup> Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 8-9.

<sup>332</sup> Cf. John 3:29.

<sup>333</sup> See Fürst, *Streit unter Freunden*, 133-134; cf. Job 6:14.

<sup>334</sup> Plato, *Symp.* 179B; Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 9.8.9; Cicero, *Amic.* 7.24.

<sup>335</sup> Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 8.7.1-6.

<sup>336</sup> See Konstan, "Friendship, Frankness and Flattery," 8-9. This implies that friendship included obligations (Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 2:1008), although giving is more important than receiving (Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 8.13.2; 8.8.3). The love of the friend also prevents one to ask for "services that are morally degrading" (Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 8.8.5 [Rackham, LCL]).

<sup>337</sup> The story of Jonathan and David shows similarity to the Greco-Roman idea of friendship; see 1 Sam 18:1, 3; also Ps 15:3; Sir 22:25.

<sup>338</sup> See Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2:682; Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 2:1004; Gerald L. Borchert, *John* 12-21, NAC 25B (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2002), 148. Although Sir 6:7-17 emphasizes loyalty and the well-being of the other, it does not mention the idea of laying down one's life for the other.

<sup>339</sup> See Josephus, *1 J.W.* 43-45.

<sup>340</sup> Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 8.4.6. All three involve goodwill as well, of which both partners must be aware (8.2.3-4; 9.5), but "in a friendship based on utility or on pleasure men love their friend for their own good or their own pleasure" (8.3.2 [Rackham, LCL]). The OT also mentions usefulness or pleasure as the basis of friendships; see Prov 14:20; 19:4, 6 and Sir 6:8.

<sup>341</sup> Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 8.3.6 (Rackham, LCL). See also Cicero, *Amic.* 14.49-51.

<sup>342</sup> See Cicero, *Amic.* 27.100: "Virtue, I say, both creates the bond of friendship and preserves it" (Falconer, LCL).

<sup>343</sup> Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 8.1.5; 9.8.9-11. "A true friend must be a good man" (8.1.5 [Rackham, LCL]).

<sup>344</sup> Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 9.8.2 (Rackham, LCL).

<sup>345</sup> Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 8.3.6.

<sup>346</sup> Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 8.1.1 (Rackham, LCL).

<sup>347</sup> Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 8.1.1, 4; 9.9.2.

<sup>348</sup> Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 9.9.2 (Rackham, LCL).



virtue (cf. Wis 7-9).<sup>349</sup> This implies that virtue and good are defined in relation to God and wisdom.<sup>350</sup>

The idea of friendship in Wis resembles the Greco-Roman idea of friendship; however, with regard to the source of friendship, it is in line with the OT idea. The righteous who becomes the friend of God is virtuous. Being virtuous, however, means thinking and acting in unity with God and wisdom (2:15-16),<sup>351</sup> since it is wisdom, the source of virtue (7:7-30; 8:5-7), that makes one virtuous. The righteous obtains friendship with God through God's wisdom (7:14b, 27; 8:17-18). Friendship in Wis, thus, involves unity with God and wisdom.<sup>352</sup>

To get a clearer picture of friendship between God/wisdom and man in Wis, we consider the elements of mapping between the domain God and the domain friend. Since these qualities are also discussed in detail elsewhere, we reflect on them briefly. The friendship of God requires sincere heart and openness, but it also implies goodness:

φρονήσατε περὶ τοῦ κυρίου  
ἐν ἀγαθότητι  
καὶ  
ἐν ἀπλότητι καρδίας  
ζητήσατε αὐτόν<sup>353</sup> (1:1cd)

These elements already show that Wis' idea of friendship is in tune with the ancient reflections on friendship. Loyalty and faith (1:1-2; 3:9) are also essential qualities of the friendship between

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<sup>349</sup> See Jan G. van der Watt, *'Thou Shalt . . . Do the Will of God': Do New Testament Ethics Have Anything to Say Today?* (Nijmegen: Radboud University, 2010), 5-7. The Stoics, for example, regarded nature as the source of virtue; see Brad Inwood and Pierluigi Donini, "Stoic Ethics," in *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy*, ed. Keimpe Algra et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999; repr., 2002), 675-676.

<sup>350</sup> See the section on the value system of the righteous and the wicked.

<sup>351</sup> See Harrington, *Invitation to the Apocrypha*, 4, 57. McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 182: "Friends of God" is "a term with technical connotations, implying those who live a life of virtue in their efforts to be 'like unto God.'"

<sup>352</sup> See also the section on symbiosis with wisdom.

<sup>353</sup> Think of the Lord in goodness and seek him with sincerity of heart. See the analysis of the verse at the section on love.

God and the righteous. The righteous responds with faith even when God tests him; therefore he passes the test of God (3:5c-6).<sup>354</sup>

καὶ οἱ πιστοὶ ἐν ἀγάπῃ προσμενοῦσιν αὐτῷ<sup>355</sup> (3:9b).

This verse already relates to another quality of friendship, namely, love that is also shared by God and the righteous (4:10; 8:2; 7:10, 28). 7:27c-28 very clearly relates love and friendship:

καὶ κατὰ γενεὰς εἰς ψυχὰς ὁσίας μεταβαίνουσα  
φίλους θεοῦ καὶ προφήτας κατασκευάζει  
οὐθὲν γὰρ ἀγαπᾷ ὁ θεὸς εἰ μὴ τὸν σοφία συνοικοῦντα<sup>356</sup>

Frankness and the interest of the other are also implied in the friendship between God and the righteous; God does everything to save the righteous (see chaps. 11-19) to the point of chastising them in order to save them (3:6; 11:8-9; see also 16:11ff).<sup>357</sup> This idea matches the ancient idea of frankness as essential quality of true friendship.<sup>358</sup>

Finally, we reflect on sharing as another important quality of friendship that shows what the righteous can acquire through the unity with God.

ὅτι ἀθανασία ἐστὶν ἐν συγγενείᾳ σοφίας  
καὶ ἐν φιλίᾳ αὐτῆς τέρψις ἀγαθῇ  
καὶ ἐν πόνοις χειρῶν αὐτῆς πλοῦτος ἀνεκλιπῆς

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<sup>354</sup> Commenting on James 2:23, Luke Timothy Johnson, "Friendship with the World and Friendship with God: A Study of Discipleship in James," in *Brother of Jesus, Friend of God: Studies in the Letter of James*, ed. Luke Timothy Johnson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 215, says that Abraham is called here "the friend of God" because he "believed God" (Gen 15:6) and because he responded with faith to God's test. Robert W. Wall, *Community of the Wise: The Letter of James*, NTC (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997), 29, 199, 201, also notes that "wise response" to God's will/test and loyalty is the requirement of the friendship with God in James (cf. James 2:23; 4:4). See also Scot McKnight, *The Letter of James*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 253-255. See more about the test of God below at "ALIVE IS UP."

<sup>355</sup> And the faithful will abide with him in love.

<sup>356</sup> In every generation she passes into holy souls and makes them friends of God, and prophets; for God loves nothing so much as the person who lives with wisdom.

<sup>357</sup> See Harrington, *Invitation to the Apocrypha*, 60-61, who says that Wis answered the problem of innocent suffering by this.

<sup>358</sup> The term παρρησία appears in Wis 5:1 as well; here at the judgment scene, however, it shows the attitude of the righteous towards the wicked.

καὶ ἐν συγγυμνασίᾳ ὁμιλίας αὐτῆς φρόνησις  
καὶ εὐκλεία ἐν κοινωνίᾳ λόγων αὐτῆς<sup>359</sup> (8:17b-18d).

Unity with God means sharing knowledge, goods and life.<sup>360</sup> Since true friendship is permanent, the righteous will share these forever, which already includes the idea of immortality. 8:17b-18 lists the gifts that one receives in communion with wisdom. The greatest gift of all is immortality, but the parallel sentences extend the gifts to include pleasure, wealth, understanding and renown.<sup>361</sup> These treasures may refer to spiritual gifts. Delight may refer to the enjoyment of the relationship with God. Wealth, since it is unfailing, probably means spiritual wealth. Understanding extends from the knowledge of the world to the knowledge of God. Renown may also mean being honoured by God. However, as the context shows, the gifts probably have their earthly aspects as well.<sup>362</sup> Solomon wants to be found a good judge and good king (8:9-16); so the gifts also refer to earthly reputation, honour, wealth, knowledge and delight.

Up to now one aspect of friendship was not considered, namely, equality. It was mentioned that friends are equal. However, not all friendships are based on equality.<sup>363</sup> As we see in Wis, the friendship between God and the righteous is the latter. We discussed the relationship between the Creator and human beings, the King and his subjects, between the Father and his children. All these relationships involve persons that are not equal in terms of status. Yet, God who is the creator, king and father can be the friend of man in Wis. *Reciprocity*, however, works in a different way in unequal relationships. As Aristotle formulates it, “the benefits that one party receives and is entitled to claim from the other are not the same on either side.”<sup>364</sup> “Both parties should receive a larger share from the friendship, but not a larger share of the same thing: the superior should receive the larger share of honour, the needy one the larger share of profit.”<sup>365</sup> It

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<sup>359</sup> That in kinship with wisdom there is immortality, and in friendship with her, pure delight, and in the labors of her hands, unfailing wealth, and in the experience of her company, understanding, and renown in sharing her words.

<sup>360</sup> Laying down one’s life for the other is not mentioned, contrary to John.

<sup>361</sup> For the goods provided by wisdom, see also 7:11-8:18. Bennema, *The Power of Saving Wisdom*, 224, points to immortality, love and knowledge as the qualities of friendship with wisdom (cf. 8:17-18; 6:12; 7:10; 8:2).

<sup>362</sup> See also the discussion on 8:13.

<sup>363</sup> E.g. friendship between ruler-persons ruled, father-son, Jesus-disciples, wisdom-righteous.

<sup>364</sup> Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 8.7.2 (Rackham, LCL); see also 8.14.

<sup>365</sup> Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 8.14.2 (Rackham, LCL).

is the Father/wisdom that commands or advises the righteous and never vice versa. Nevertheless, sharing remains the essential characteristics of this relationship as well: God/wisdom cares for the righteous and shares their life with them to save him from death, while the righteous pleases God (4:10, 11, 14). So friendship does not annul the other relationships, but it adds something more to the relation between God and the righteous. Aristotle also says:

The friendship of a father for his child is of the same kind (only here the benefits bestowed are greater, for the father is the source of the child's existence, which seems to be the greatest of all boons, and of its nurture and education; and we also ascribe the same benefits to our forefathers) . . . These friendships then involve a superiority of benefits on one side, which is why parents receive honour as well as service.<sup>366</sup>

In the images of God as a father and friend of the righteous we can grasp the proximity of God. They display a unity between God and the righteous that is based on trust and faith, but also affinity. The metaphors of family and friendship express the meeting of God and human beings, since only those who are in relation with God can call him Father (2:13, 16, 18) and Friend (7:27). The transcendent of God does not change in these images either since God becomes the father and friend of the righteous through wisdom. Those who receive wisdom enter into a blessed communion with God; in this communion they become the friends of God (7:14, 27) and children of God (2:13, 18).<sup>367</sup> This also lets us grasp a concept of immortality that is already in progress on earth.

#### **2.1.1.5 The Mosaic of the Images of God**

As it was seen, the doctrine of God in Wis is best described as a diversity of images: God is viewed as a transcendent and omniscient creator, a sovereign but merciful king and judge, a father, and also a friend.<sup>368</sup> These different images interrelate to create a mosaic of the

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<sup>366</sup> Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 8.11.2-3 (Rackham, LCL).

<sup>367</sup> See also Bennema, *The Power of Saving Wisdom*, 62.

<sup>368</sup> Kirsten Nielsen, "Metaphors and Biblical Theology," in Hecke, *Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible*, 263, observes: "In the Old Testament, 'king' may be considered as the root metaphor for God. . . . In the New Testament, 'father' is the root metaphor for God." She also notes that beside these "root metaphors" there are many other metaphors, personal and impersonal, used ("Metaphors and Biblical Theology," 263). Nielsen, "Metaphors and Biblical Theology," 264, goes on to say that "these metaphors are in constant dialogue with

representations of God. We have described these images independently, and now we have to see how these images are working within the mosaic. Are they coherent with each other? Can a king who judges be a father and a friend as well? What is the relationship between these images of God? And finally, what is the importance of these roles in the context of immortality?

Before entering into discussion, we have to see what the term mosaic implies. A mosaic picture means that the elements combined retain their characteristic features, but they also work together on a second level. So, when Wis describes God as creator, king, father and friend, none of the elements erase the others or the characteristic features of the others, but what happens is that besides retaining the characteristics of single elements, the mosaic will be enriched with the dynamics that arises from the relation of the elements with each other.<sup>369</sup> Thus, when we look at how the picture of God relates to the concept of immortality, we do not only consider single elements of this picture, but also the combinations of these elements.

The picture we get of God is made up of several images, the creator, king, father and friend, and the combination of all these. In the dynamics of these images there is an element that is closely related to the fate of human beings. We know that they do not have the same fate; one is saved, while the other is condemned. Where does the pivot of their fate lie? I would say that we get to this pivot if we look at how the picture of God alters in relation to the righteous and the wicked. The picture of God that includes all the elements described above is the understanding and reflection of the author. But what human beings' conception of God encompasses depends on their experience and relationship with God. Thus the key we are looking for is *relation*. This is the element that shapes the picture of God in the case of all human beings. By this it is forecasted that the diversity of God's images is not revealed to all. Some images of God and some features of other images are disclosed to and experienced by either the wicked or the righteous.

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each other. . . . The root metaphors are personal metaphors and they underline the personal relationship with between God and mankind." To our purpose this personal relationship is more important, since immortality is a relational concept, based on the interaction of God and human beings; therefore we deal with what Nielsen calls "root metaphors," completed with other metaphors (also impersonal) that we believe shed light on other aspects of the believers' relationship with God and immortality.

<sup>369</sup> Cf. Ruben Zimmermann, "Imagery in John: Opening up Paths into the Tangled Thicket of John's Figurative World," in *Imagery in the Gospel of John: Terms, Forms, Themes, and Theology of Johannine Figurative Language*, ed. Jörg Frey et al., WUNT 200 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 36-38, who explains the connection and function of images in relation to Christ.

The wicked do not have any picture of God before their judgment happens in 4:19-5:13 because they do not believe in the existence of God; God does not exist for them. They do not perceive the Creator and King of the earth; therefore do not have any relation with him. At the moment of judgment they realize the existence of God, but having no relation with God whatsoever, the only aspect of God they have left to experience is that of the king who casts judgment on them. So for the unrighteous, God is the king, whose wrath leads to destruction (4:19; 5:17-23; 11:9; 16:5; 18:20-25<sup>370</sup>). But how can the images of a creator who created all for living and the judge who destroys the wicked be compatible? We have said above that God is both righteous and merciful. As a merciful creator, God gives a chance to repent to all, but since God is righteous, he is opposing unrighteousness, and therefore he judges the wicked. As a righteous God, he must uphold the order, and therefore, judge and punish the wicked.

Similarly to the wicked, the righteous will never experience the aspect of God that will be perceived by the wicked. Although God also examines the righteous, he does not judge him in the sense of condemnation. For the righteous, God is the king who protects him with his right hand, and who gives him eternal kingship in his kingdom (3:1-9; 5:15-16). The protection and care of God will not be experienced by the wicked because they do not accept the existence of such an authority and they do not relate to him through wisdom. That is how one's conception of God and one's relationship with God interrelate. What the righteous and the wicked believe of God has consequences on their relationship of God and at the end, it shapes their life.

The two remaining images of God are only visible for the righteous: God is the father and friend of the righteous. There is no discrepancy between the images of the omniscient creator and sovereign king and that of a father and a friend. They all describe different types of relationship. That these latter two are different sets of relationship is also shown by the fact that while God is the creator of all and the king of all, he is the father and the friend of the righteous alone. The image of the creator stresses that God created man "in the image of his own eternity" (2:23). As the king and judge of the cosmos God protects his loyal servants and rewards them. The images

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<sup>370</sup> Dodson, *The 'Powers' of Personification*, 91, argues that the personification of wrath in 18:20-25 "serves to distance God" from the destruction of Israel in the Exodus account; see also *The 'Powers' of Personification*, 90-99.

of God as father and friend describe a more intimate relationship with God. As the father and friend of the righteous, God creates a bond between the members of a family and between friends. Being in the family of God means taking part in the life of God, that is eternal life. Friendship with God means that one shares the properties of God. The perspective of immortality is included in all the images. However, the images of the family and friendship with God imply the realization of the secret plan of God (2:22-23).<sup>371</sup> So we could say that the surety of immortality lies in the dynamics of God's roles that is creatorship, kingship, fatherhood and friendship.

And a final remark, the text also implies that had the wicked discovered the Creator God in their lives, they would have also known the Father and Friend because opening up to the Creator leads to wisdom that makes one the child and friend of God (7:27).

## 2.1.2 The Kingdom of Hades

### 2.1.2.1 The Realm of Hades

We have gone through the doctrine of God and described God creating, preserving and saving the cosmos. One of the images of God was that of the judge. This latter function assumes the presence of evil and unrighteousness on the earth, and it shows that God takes actions against evil: he judges and condemns the wicked. The judgment scene in 1:6-10 is followed by an exhortation, an appeal to avoid grumbling, which simultaneously constitutes the transition to the treatment of death:

φυλάξασθε τοίνυν

γογγυσμὸν ἀνωφελῇ

καὶ

ἀπὸ καταλαλιᾶς

φείσασθε γλώσσης

ὅτι φθέγμα λαθραῖον

κενὸν οὐ πορεύεται

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<sup>371</sup> See more about the secret of God below.

στόμα δὲ καταψευδόμενον  
ἀναιρεῖ ψυχὴν<sup>372</sup> (1:11).

The context links death to judgment implying that death is the result of God's judgment. The chiasmic structure emphasizes that grumbling is a fatal error that will have serious consequences. The parallel makes the warning louder: grumbling leads to death. Ἀναιρέω in the active voice means *kill, destroy, do away with* or even *condemn to death*.<sup>373</sup> In the light of what we can conclude from the anthropology of Wis,<sup>374</sup> we would say that ἀναιρεῖ ψυχὴν probably refers to the whole person, who is body and soul.<sup>375</sup>

1:13 gives us a different view on death:

ὅτι ὁ θεὸς  
θάνατον  
οὐκ ἐποίησεν  
οὐδὲ τέρπεται  
ἐπ' ἀπωλείᾳ ζώντων<sup>376</sup>

This statement clearly emphasizes that God has no involvement with death; death is not coming from God. Is this statement then coherent with the one mentioned previously that death is the result of God's judgment? If these two statements are coherent, what does the concept of death involve? Let us start with the appearance of death. Here is the setting, another call that warns the audience in 1:12a:

μὴ ζηλοῦτε θάνατον  
ἐν πλάνῃ ζωῆς ὑμῶν  
μηδὲ ἐπισπᾶσθε ὄλεθρον  
ἐν ἔργοις χειρῶν ὑμῶν<sup>377</sup>

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<sup>372</sup> Beware then of useless grumbling, and keep your tongue from slander; because no secret word is without result, and a lying mouth destroys the soul.

<sup>373</sup> "ἀναιρέω," ANLEX, ad loc.; "ἀναιρέω," BDAG, ad loc.; "ἀναιρέω," UBS, ad loc.

<sup>374</sup> See the section on anthropology.

<sup>375</sup> Cf. Wis 3:1.

<sup>376</sup> Because God did not make death, and he does not delight in the death of the living.



The call in 1:12 serves two purposes. Firstly, by warning the audience, the author acknowledges the existence of death. Secondly, people's responsibility in choosing God or death is underlined. Μὴ ζηλοῦτε θάνατον and μηδὲ ἐπισπᾶσθε ὄλεθρον involves the direct participation of the wicked in bringing death into their lives; the idea can be paralleled with the very first call of Wis:<sup>378</sup> Ἀγαπήσατε δικαιοσύνην . . . φρονήσατε περὶ τοῦ κυρίου . . . ζητήσατε αὐτόν.<sup>379</sup>

By this an opposition is created between righteousness and God on the one side and death on the other side. Moreover, death and wickedness are set on the same side as concepts belonging together. This opposition also tells us that if one does not love righteousness and God, he will find death, or to put it differently, those who look for God do not die. The contrast between God and death deepens with 1:13 that sets a clear demarcation between God and death: "God did not make death, and he does not delight in the death of the living."<sup>380</sup> This contrast is expanded to the creation as well:

καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν

ἐν αὐταῖς

φάρμακον ὀλέθρου

οὔτε

ἄδου βασιλείον

ἐπὶ γῆς<sup>381</sup> (1:14cd).

The chiasm again serves for emphasis: God created all for living and there is no death on earth (1:14).<sup>382</sup> The *poison of destruction* describes death as something that would disturb the order, harmony and salubrity of the cosmos,<sup>383</sup> but the earth was meant to be free from this poison. And

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<sup>377</sup> Do not invite death by the error of your life, or bring on destruction by the works of your hands.

<sup>378</sup> See Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 36.

<sup>379</sup> Love righteousness . . . think of the Lord . . . seek him. See more about 1:1 at the discussion on love.

<sup>380</sup> Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 57: "The doctrine that God is altogether good and cannot produce anything evil is a Philonic doctrine . . . It implies absolute free-will with regard to sin, as stated in Deut. 30.19." Clarke, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 20: "the argument here suggests absolute free-will as expressed in Deut. 30:19 'I offer you the choice of life or death, blessing or curse. Choose life.'"

<sup>381</sup> And there is no poison of destruction in them, nor the dominion of Hades is on earth [own trans.].

<sup>382</sup> The parallel in 1:12 equates ὄλεθρος (destruction) with θάνατος (death). See also 18:13.

<sup>383</sup> For the implication of this sentence with regard to the existence of creation, see the chapter on earth.

yet, if the author warns us, death must exist on earth, but in the light of the author's statements about death, we are directed to believe that it must have come from outside the cosmos and outside the realm of God.<sup>384</sup> Its appearance on earth is seen as an "intrusion."<sup>385</sup> The parallel in 1:14cd links death with the kingdom of Hades to which it seems to belong and from which it must have come on earth.<sup>386</sup> Ἄδου βασιλείος appears to be a third realm besides the heaven and creation, a kingdom where death has dominion. Hades' kingdom is separated from God's kingdom and the earth; it is neither part of God's realm, nor of the creation.<sup>387</sup> The position of Hades in this cosmology can be visualized by the help of the orientational metaphor: HADES IS DOWN. 16:13 says: "you lead mortals down [κατάγεις] to the gates of Hades and back again."<sup>388</sup> Hades is positioned *down* relative to the Kingdom of God and also to the earth; thus, the cosmology has three levels, divine world—earth—Hades. This metaphor emphasizes the contrast

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<sup>384</sup> 2:24a (θάνατος εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον) shows that the dominion of death is outside of earth and there was no death on earth when God created it (1:14); thus, death has to enter the earth from outside; see Frederic Raurell, "From ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗ to ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ (Wis 1, 1.15)," in *Treasures of Wisdom: Studies in Ben Sira and the Book of Wisdom*, ed. Núria Calduch-Benages and J. Vermeylen, BETL 143 (Leuven: Leuven University Press; Leuven: Peeters, 1999), 347. Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 23, referring to Whitehouse ("Satan," in DB(H) 4), says that "for the Palestinian Jews, with their strong sense of the supremacy of God, sin and misfortune, and even the work of Satan and evil spirits, could not be viewed as being outside the Divine causality. Satan is regarded in O.T. as a subordinate agent of God, although not reflecting the mind of God." Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 23, then adds: "This conception did not satisfy the Alexandrian mind. If on the one hand God could not be supreme without being the ultimate cause of evil, on the other hand the transcendence of God seemed violated if He were conceived of as having any part in evil. Hence in Wisd. ii. 24 the devil is made the sole author of physical death." Although I accept the first part of Gregg's argument for the reasons that will be described below, I argue that death which came in the world through Hades does not refer to physical death.

<sup>385</sup> Kolarcik, "Creation and Salvation," 99.

<sup>386</sup> This can be concluded from 1:13-14: "God did not make death"; Hades' world is not on earth and the poison of destruction is not in the world. In conclusion the death that God did not make must be in Hades' world; cf. 2:24. See also Amir, "The Figure of Death," 159-160.

<sup>387</sup> See also Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 67.

<sup>388</sup> In 16:12-13 Hades seems to refer to the state of physical death: God can rescue even those who were bit by serpents; he can lead people down to Hades and back (see Deut 32:39; 1 Sam 2:6; 1 Kgs 17:17-23). However, if we look at the context, we can see reference to the Egyptians' death that were punished by God. 16:11 says that "to remind them of your oracles they were bitten," which probably means that they came back not only from the state of physical death, but from spiritual death, too. Therefore, here, too, Hades is associated with ultimate death. See McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 194-195; Angelo Passaro, "The Serpent and the Manna or the Saving Word: Exegesis of Wis 16," in Passaro and Bellia, *The Book of Wisdom in Modern Research*, 190-191. Cf. R. J. Taylor, "The Eschatological Meaning of Life and Death in the Book of Wisdom 1-5," *ETL* 42 (1966): 103. However, because of the overtone of the verse that may also imply physical death, this statement strengthens the idea that what the author means by ultimate death is not eternal suffering, but the wicked cease to exist with physical death.

between God's kingdom and Hades as two opposite poles. The text clearly says that death is not made by God; it exists separately from God (1:13-14),<sup>389</sup> and it also stands in opposition to God. So there is a clear and strong contrast between God and death. This opposition, however, does not imply that Hades is the counterpart of God as Hades is shown weak compared to God (17:13).<sup>390</sup> Nor does it involve a projection of an anti-god in the figure of Hades.<sup>391</sup> The author claims God's supremacy over Hades and people that he can condemn to death (1:11; 4:19; etc.).

Hades contrasts the creation as well, which is meant to be healthy and good.<sup>392</sup> The connection between Hades and the earth is made by the wicked:

ἀσεβεῖς δὲ ταῖς χερσὶν καὶ τοῖς λόγοις προσεκαλέσαντο αὐτόν  
 φίλον ἡγησάμενοι αὐτόν ἐτάκησαν  
 καὶ συνθήκην ἔθεντο πρὸς αὐτόν  
 ὅτι ἄξιοί εἰσιν τῆς ἐκείνου μερίδος εἶναι<sup>393</sup> (1:16).

And there the king of this third realm appears on the earth, invited by the ungodly that make covenant with him.<sup>394</sup> The ruler of the kingdom where death lies brings death into the world.

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<sup>389</sup> See Amir, "The Figure of Death," 159-160; Goodrick, *Wisdom*, 96-98. A. P. Hayman, "The Survival of Mythology in the Wisdom of Solomon," *JSJ* 30 (1999): 136, says that if death and evil are not created and enter from outside, then "they were always there in the person of their source, the Devil/Mot."

<sup>390</sup> For the powerlessness of Death's domain and his impotence on earth, see 17:13; also 1:14. See Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 282; Murphy, "'To Know Your Might is the Root of Immortality,'" 88-93. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 190, says that "the apparent metaphysical dualism of Wis. 2:24 seems inconsistent with the dominance of God and wisdom in the rest of the book. In a world pervaded by the spirit of wisdom, evil is anomalous, and it engages the attention of the author only as a foil for the righteousness that he advocates."

<sup>391</sup> Based on the observation that the text stresses God's supremacy, some scholars argue that Wis does not imply dualism. See Clarke, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 27-28, and Beverly Roberts Gaventa, "The Rhetoric of Death in the Wisdom of Solomon and the Letters of Paul," in *The Listening Heart: Essays in Wisdom and the Psalms in Honor of Roland E. Murphy, O. Carm.*, ed. Kenneth G. Hoglund et al., JSOTSup 58 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987), 132. Gaventa says that 1:12-15 seems "to contradict Hebrew tradition by separating death from God's intention for creation . . . Later on, however, Wisdom asserts God's power over death (15.3, 16.13)" ("The Rhetoric of Death," 132).

<sup>392</sup> See the chapter on the earth.

<sup>393</sup> But the ungodly by their words and deeds summoned death; considering him a friend, they pined away and made a covenant with him, because they are fit to belong to his company.

<sup>394</sup> Amir, "The Figure of Death," 157: "An overlord, to whom the wicked are allotted as his portion, . . . fits into a dualistic pattern in which mankind, or perhaps the world at large (if the wicked are said to be 'of' his portion, that portion may not be confined to human beings), is divided into good and bad. As such, he must be a kind of rival figure to God himself." Hayman, "The Survival of Mythology," 128 n. 8, argues that at "an intellectual

Hades' entrance is described as a *movement* into the world. As a result, the earth is seen overlapped by Hades. The appearance of death involves a change; it changes the existence of the wicked that from now on belong to its party. We can grasp the metaphor CHANGES ARE MOVEMENTS<sup>395</sup> here. But this metaphor that views the appearance of death in the world as a movement into the world has other aspects as well: it shows that death was not there before, and it relates to another metaphor that views events as actions of an agent.<sup>396</sup> This latter notion lets us perceive death as an action of an agent.

With this statement we have anticipated our answer to the question whether Hades is the image of a mythological figure<sup>397</sup> that appears as the enemy of God<sup>398</sup> or it is a personification that

level our author is a monist, but at the emotional level a dualist." Although we argued above that Wis author emphasizes the supremacy of God, Hayman, "The Survival of Mythology," 127-128, grasps the incongruence in his arguments: "He believes that God could have destroyed all Israel's enemies with one blow (11:20) but has not actually done so because he wanted to give them an opportunity to repent (12:9). . . . The trouble is that the author then goes on to say that some of these enemies, especially the Canaanites, were so incorrigibly evil from birth that they never could have repented (12:10)." Hayman, "The Survival of Mythology," 128, notes another contradiction as well: 11:24 says that God loves all things that he created but detests those who make "detestable practices" (12:3-4); thus he must hate the Devil, too and if so, he could not have made him because of what is stated in 11:24. Hayman answers this inconsistency by arguing that the author's thinking is more imbedded in the mythological world of the OT than in the philosophical one ("The Survival of Mythology," 138).

<sup>395</sup> One of the metaphors that perceive different aspects of events; see Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 135. For the detailed description of the "event structure metaphor," see Lakoff, "The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor," 219-229.

<sup>396</sup> See the explanation of the metaphor below.

<sup>397</sup> There are scholars who emphasize the mythological aspect of Hades. Amir, "The Figure of Death," 157, argues that "the author's understanding of death is not altogether conceptual. Behind factual assertions about human death looms the mythological figure of *Thanatos*." However, Amir, "The Figure of Death," 169, also notes that the mythological aspect is "only one thread, and not the most important one," in the author's "complex way of thinking." Hayman, "The Survival of Mythology," 130-139, stresses the mythological aspect of Wis even more. In his view death in Wis is not an abstract theological concept but "the old image of Death/Hades, the devouring monster, the opponent of all the order imposed on the world" by God, similar to the Ugaritic Mot ("The Survival of Mythology," 131). He also argues that "the words placed in the mouth of the wicked in 2:1 hardly make them friends of death" (2:24) ("The Survival of Mythology," 131). In my opinion, there is no incongruence between 2:1 and 2:24 if we understand these texts in terms of the wicked' growing involvement with death (see the section on the spiritual death) because we will see that what actually happens in 2:1 and 2:24 is that by their wrong thinking the wicked "locked out" God from their lives and this is the way they "invited" death.

<sup>398</sup> Collins, "Apocalyptic Eschatology in Philosophical Dress," 97: "Death is personified in a manner that recalls the figure of Mot in Ugaritic myth, which in turn is reflected in biblical passages such as Isa 25:7." Regarding the statement that "God did not make death," Collins, "Apocalyptic Eschatology in Philosophical Dress," 98, says that it "may perhaps be illuminated by the mythological pre-history of death. The adversaries of Baal in the Ugaritic myth, Death and Sea, are uncreated, and in much of the Hebrew Bible God's work in creation

perceives an abstract concept in terms of a human being. I will argue that it is the latter: the figure of Hades is a personification that structures the concept of death. The text mentions this figure only two times, in 1:16 and 2:24,<sup>399</sup> and although these are emphatic verses, the rest of the text does not show him anymore;<sup>400</sup> God seems to be fighting with evil and wickedness, and not with a person. From this it appears that the enemy of God and the cosmos is actually the concept of death. The mythological aspect of death does not rule out the theological concept behind. On the contrary, the personification serves to visualize God's enemy.<sup>401</sup> By visualizing the figure of death, we understand how it works on people, how the wicked commit themselves to a spiritual world, which leads to their ultimate destruction.<sup>402</sup> So the figure of Hades is a metaphorical conception to make the function of evil understandable. Moreover, as Dodson observes,<sup>403</sup> via conceiving death as a mythological figure, the sage pursues "at least two purposes: 1) to distance God from the blame for death by placing responsibility elsewhere, and 2) to motivate the audience to pursue Sophia instead."

The following analysis can shed more light on the function of personification. The background of the metaphor that views death as a person is the generic metaphor EVENTS ARE ACTIONS; this schema points out that we tend to conceptualize events as if they are caused by an agent.<sup>404</sup> Death is an event in the sense that a person reaches a new state that ends his former existence.

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consists of mastering primeval adversaries and confining them." For the similarity of Hades in Wis with Mot, see also Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 110.

<sup>399</sup> Hades' kingdom seems to be identified with the devil's kingdom in 2:24a. Karina Martin Hogan, "The Exegetical Background of the 'Ambiguity of Death' in the Wisdom of Solomon," *JSJ* 30 (1999): 20 n. 60, says that since the devil is mentioned only in 2:24, the argument is not convincing, contrary to Amir, "The Figure of Death," 158, 161, and McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 66. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 190 n. 49, also contradicts Amir, based on 2:24. Anyhow, the parallel between 1:16 and 2:24 (also 1:13-14 and 2:22-23) links death and devil together, even if they are not identified. The figure of devil is not emphasized, indeed, and it is rather the concept of death and evil behind it (see 2:1c) that stands in opposition to God.

<sup>400</sup> 1:14 also mentions ἄδου βασιλείον, but the text can also refer to the realm of death there, and not a personified figure. We get the idea of a personified ruler only if we read it against 1:16 and 2:24.

<sup>401</sup> Amir says that due to the author's lack of concern for the fate of the wicked, regarding them as "nothingness" (see 2:1-5; 5:6-13), there is an "aura of metaphysical unreality that can be felt in the figure of Death" ("The Figure of Death," 177-178). Nevertheless, it has to be noted that the force of evil does appear as real power that could harm the creation (1:12-13; 4:11-12).

<sup>402</sup> Cf. Dodson, *The 'Powers' of Personification*, 56-68.

<sup>403</sup> Dodson, *The 'Powers' of Personification*, 65.

<sup>404</sup> See Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 72-80; also Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 49-50; cf. Fauconnier and Mark Turner, *The Way We Think* 291-295.

Because death is an event, we can perceive it as an act performed by an agent. So death becomes both the act performed by the agent, but the agent as well. Does this make any sense? It does. The metaphor perceives the general phenomenon of death as the cause of individual death—in other words, since the general phenomenon of death as the opponent of God exists (1:12-16), people have the chance to be part of it. Thus the general phenomenon of death appears as an agent that can bring about individual death.<sup>405</sup> Death is viewed as a figure who befriends the wicked. But the key statement of the text is ὅτι ἄξιοί εἰσιν τῆς ἐκείνου μερίδος εἶναι, the wicked belong to the company of death, a sentence so emphasized that it is also repeated in 2:24b. This sentence reflects the causal structure<sup>406</sup> within the metaphor: relation with death results in being part of the death's realm. And since God distances himself from death (1:12-14), those who belong to the company of death also lose communion with God. So we understand that death takes people to a world without God. By this metaphorical construction death is perceived as a state that separates the wicked from God and, therefore, also from life.<sup>407</sup> This may be the strongest argument against those who only see the mythological aspect of death but not the theological concept behind, for it expresses the qualitative feature of death that is separation from God. Following this argumentation we will be able to understand that the two statements, “God did not make death” and “God condemns people to death,” are coherent. “God did not make death,” indeed, but death exists and it has the connotation of separation from God. So if God condemns someone to death, it means that he separates himself from that person. In this way, although he did not make death and he has nothing to do with death, it can be said that God has power to condemn people to death by secluding himself from them.

This qualitative understanding of death has an impact on the understanding of the realm of death as well, since now we see that, too, in terms of separation from God. So similarly to the Kingdom of God, ἡδου βασιλείος displays both qualitative and quantitative attributes in Wis. The contrast between the Kingdom of God and Hades is not only a creational contrast, but also an ethical one since the latter is the realm of evil and death; this feature characterizes Hades

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<sup>405</sup> Although Lakoff, Turner and Fauconnier, as well as Kövecses use this schema to explain physical death and time, I use their insights to explain eternal death and immortality.

<sup>406</sup> For the causal structure of EVENTS ARE ACTIONS, see Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 82.

<sup>407</sup> Because life belongs to God; see the chapter on God.

qualitatively. Hades is weaker than God; this again displays its qualitative features. And finally, since Hades is separated from God's kingdom, being in Hades means that people have no connection with God. Nevertheless, the realm of death has quantitative features as well. They can be grasped in Hades' description as a space outside of God's kingdom and outside of the cosmos. Another feature would be the timeframe of Hades. The question is whether similarly to the Kingdom of God Hades is also eternal? Wisdom does not give a clear answer to these questions although the dualistic worldview would imply an eternal Hades.<sup>408</sup> But even if it is eternal, it is not clarified by the Wis text what this eternity implies.

In conclusion, although the image of Hades is mythological and Hades defines both the underworld and the ruler of the underworld, these seem to be metaphorical conceptions that describe the concept of death qualitatively and quantitatively.

#### *2.1.2.2 The Notion of Death*

We have pointed out that death stands in opposition to God and the earth; it is linked to evil, and it has the connotation of separation from God. But the analysis we made above left us with some new questions. The death of the righteous in 3:1-6 confronts us with a crucial one: how can the experience of the righteous be consistent with what has been said in 1:12-13? If "God did not make death," why do the righteous experience death?<sup>409</sup> From this some other questions derive: do the righteous really die? Is there death for all? And last, but not least, how is the death of the righteous related to immortality? Another set of question is linked to the wicked: how do they get involved with death? What happens when they die? And is the death they experience an eternal state?

Death in Wis was interpreted in many ways: mortality, spiritual death, eternal death or physical death as punishment. Some of the interpretations see it as a complex notion that comprises more

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<sup>408</sup> Since it is contrasted with God from the beginning as an opposing kingdom that is not created, it would be logical to assume its eternity.

<sup>409</sup> If we accept that the righteous' suffering is reflecting a historical context where persecution was going on, then the first and foremost question is this. The answer of the author is: don't be afraid of death because you are not going to experience ultimate death but immortality.

connotations. The analysis of the scholars mostly centred around 1:13 and 2:24a.<sup>410</sup> However, it is our opinion that in order to capture the complexity of the notion of death and distinguish between different connotations, we have to take into account other passages, too, as well as the cosmology of the book.<sup>411</sup> Since our focus is on immortality, one may find the length of the chapter dealing with death excessive, but in order to understand thoroughly what immortality is, we have to know what death is.

### *Mortality*

Death, as we described above, is linked to the evil and the wicked. It is something that God did not make and from which he separates himself. The author's exhortation in 1:12-14 is aimed at preventing human beings from sharing death. But reading 3:1-6, we meet a problem for this passage speaks not of the death of the wicked, but of the death of the righteous:

δικαίων δὲ ψυχὰι ἐν χειρὶ θεοῦ  
καὶ οὐ μὴ ᾗσεται αὐτῶν βάσανος  
ἔδοξαν ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς ἀφρόνων τεθνάναι  
καὶ ἐλογίσθη κάκωσις ἢ ἔξοδος αὐτῶν  
καὶ ἢ ἀφ' ἡμῶν πορεία σύντριμμα  
οἱ δὲ εἰσιν ἐν εἰρήνῃ  
καὶ γὰρ ἐν ὄψει ἀνθρώπων ἐὰν κολασθῶσιν  
ἢ ἐλπὶς αὐτῶν ἀθανασίας πλήρης  
καὶ ὀλίγα παιδευθέντες

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<sup>410</sup> For the different interpretations of various scholars, see Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 135-158.

<sup>411</sup> My attempt to distinguish between the different notions of death are not based on the different terms employed by the author, since Taylor, "The Eschatological Meaning of Life and Death," 102-116, has already noted the author's inconsistency in the usage of the different terms. I would rather base my argument on the context of the terms and the whole worldview of the book and also draw on Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, who has unfolded the "ambiguity of death" in Wis (see esp. 158-183). Supporting Kolarcik, Hogan, "The Exegetical Background of the 'Ambiguity of Death,'" 24, argues that the audience of Wis could have understood the "ambiguity of death," since the Alexandrian Jewish community was probably familiar with such interpretations. See Hogan, "The Exegetical Background of the 'Ambiguity of Death,'" 4-24 for the similarities in Wis and Philo regarding the interpretation of Gen 1-4 that show that there must have been a common exegetical tradition in the background. For the exegetical motifs in Wisdom, see James L. Kugel, *The Bible as it Was* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1997).



μεγάλα εὐεργετηθήσονται  
 ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ἐπείρασεν αὐτοὺς  
 καὶ εὗρεν αὐτοὺς ἀξίους ἑαυτοῦ  
 ὥς χρυσὸν ἐν χωνευτηρίῳ ἐδοκίμασεν αὐτοὺς  
 καὶ ὥς ὀλοκάρπωμα θυσίας προσεδέξατο αὐτούς<sup>412</sup>

The text points back to 2:17-20 where the righteous is condemned to death by the wicked. God does not save the righteous from death; the righteous dies. The similes in 3:6 clearly imply physical death.<sup>413</sup> But the text also mentions that the righteous is in the hand of God with the hope of immortality. These two ideas together have consequences on the concept of death in some respect. Firstly, because it is the righteous that experiences it, it cannot be equated with *death that God did not make* that is linked to the wicked alone. Secondly, if God does not save the righteous from it, or to put it differently, salvation does not mean that God saves the righteous from death, this death must be part of the human condition. Thirdly, 3:1-6 implies a notion of death that is not contrasting the idea of immortality. Thus, 3:1-6 speaks about mortality or physical death that characterizes all human beings on earth as a result of their created nature. As it is described also in Solomon's prayer in 7:1:

εἰμὶ μὲν κἀγὼ θνητὸς ἄνθρωπος  
 ἴσος ἅπασιν  
 καὶ γηγενοῦς ἀπόγονος πρωτοπλάστου

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<sup>412</sup> But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them. In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be a disaster, and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace. For though in the sight of others they were punished, their hope is full of immortality. Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of himself; like gold in the furnace he tried them, and like a sacrificial burnt offering he accepted them.

<sup>413</sup> On the one hand physical death is implied (gold is melted, sacrifice is burnt); on the other hand, the verse also implies testing and purification, because gold is in a stone and has to be purified (Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 84-85). This does appear as sacrificial language (cf. Isa 53:4-6; 53:11-12); however, the vicarious suffering for others does not seem to be present, as George W. E. Nickelsburg and Michael E. Stone, *Faith and Piety in Early Judaism: Texts and Documents* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 135 n. k, and M. Jack Suggs, "Wisdom of Solomon 2:10-5: A Homily Based on the Fourth Servant Song," *JBL* 76 (1957): 31, noted. As McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 79-80, states, in Wis "the motivation of justice for the just man is in response to his recognition of God's activity in the world, his awareness of God's attributes, and his willingness to suffer in allegiance to that principle."

καὶ ἐν κοιλίᾳ μητρὸς ἐγλύφην σὰρξ<sup>414</sup>

Mortality, therefore, is not the result of evil-doing and it is not connected to Hades.<sup>415</sup> And most importantly, mortality does not exclude the perspective of immortality. As we will see below at the discussion of human nature, mortality is perceived by metaphors that also include the perspective of immortality. We leave the detailed discussion of mortality for later where we also analyse the different conceptual metaphors that describe the transitory nature of life; in this section we mention mortality only for the sake of understanding the concept of death in its depth, and for perceiving its relation with *the death that God did not make*.

καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἴασις ἐν τελευτῇ ἀνθρώπου  
καὶ οὐκ ἐγνώσθη ὁ ἀναλύσας ἐξ ᾧδου<sup>416</sup> (2:1cd).

Here we basically have the same reference to mortality as part of human nature, but with a distinction in the tone of the verse. While 3:1-6 was the author's remark on the fate of the righteous, here the wicked lament on their life and death. Death pictured here is clearly mortality, a human condition, the fate of all (see also 7:1; 15:9-10).<sup>417</sup> The wicked are concerned with the corruption of the physical being of a person. However, that distinction in their voice, that sorrowful lamentation on one's earthly limitation, points to a more catastrophic fate. The wicked do not see beyond the earthly life; their view on life only includes mortality, but it does not include God and the perspective of immortality. Therefore, death is a limitation for them, which puts an end to their life; it is an inevitable event for which "there is no remedy."<sup>418</sup>

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<sup>414</sup> I also am mortal, like everyone else, a descendant of the first-formed child of earth; and in the womb of a mother I was molded into flesh. Clarke, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 50: this is "a purely Hebraic idea" of man; "*flesh* merely means that he is mortal and is not to be contrasted with spirit." See also 7:2-6.

<sup>415</sup> See also the anthropology and the discussion about the Fall.

<sup>416</sup> And there is no remedy when a life comes to its end, and no one has been known to return from Hades.

<sup>417</sup> See Hogan, "The Exegetical Background of the 'Ambiguity of Death,'" 15-16.

<sup>418</sup> Note that the speech of the wicked actually mirrors spiritual death (see below). Since they are not living in communion with wisdom, the wicked do not see beyond the point of death. See more about the wrong idea of the wicked about death and life below.

Some scholars question the reality of physical death in Wis.<sup>419</sup> In my view, and taken into account 3:6, the author does not deny the reality of physical death, but the interpretation the wicked give to physical death/mortality, i.e. that physical death is equal to ultimate perishing. Thus the reality which is disregarded is the reality of the wicked and it is contrasted to that of God and the righteous.<sup>420</sup>

So the difference between 2:1-5 and 3:1-9 is that only in the second one is mortality regarded in faith. This difference has an enormous impact on the human beings' life since mortality regarded in faith leads to immortality, while mortality viewed without faith leads to ultimate death. As we read the next verses of chap. 7, it becomes clear that the recognition and acceptance of one's mortality generates the desire to search for wisdom:<sup>421</sup>

εἰμὶ μὲν καὶ γὰρ θνητὸς ἄνθρωπος

...

διὰ τοῦτο εὐξάμην

καὶ φρόνησις ἐδόθη μοι

ἐπεκαλεσάμην

καὶ ἦλθεν μοι πνεῦμα σοφίας<sup>422</sup> (7:1a, 7).

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<sup>419</sup> Collins, "The Root of Immortality," 366, remarks that by Wis' denying that death is part of God's creation (1:13-14) and suggesting that the righteous' death is not real (3:1-4), death "is excluded from ordered reality." He goes on ("The Root of Immortality," 365-366) with saying that "this suggestion introduces a dichotomy between appearance and reality which is foreign to the wisdom tradition. . . . The wisdom tradition was founded on the assumption that the world of appearances is real, and proceeded inductively to understand and appreciate that world on a more profound level. . . . This tendency is not only contrary to the wisdom tradition expressed in Proverbs and Sirach but is also in tension with the basic thrust of the Wisdom of Solomon itself, which is based on the affirmation of the goodness of the created order." Gaventa, "The Rhetoric of Death," 134, also notices the contrast between reality and appearance in Wis, although his conclusion has a different turn: "Pseudo-Solomon affirms that reality is constituted not by what is available to the senses but what is available through Wisdom." Gaventa further comments ("The Rhetoric of Death," 134) that the "function of this language about death in Wisdom is to point beyond earthly time, physical life and ordinary perception, to the reality of God, who is immortal."

<sup>420</sup> See also Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 83 n. 21, 150 n. 53.

<sup>421</sup> See Vignolo, "Wisdom, Prayer and Kingly Pattern," 277-280.

<sup>422</sup> I also am mortal . . . Therefore I prayed, and understanding was given me; I called on God, and the spirit of wisdom came to me.

The righteous that regard mortality in faith are open to God and relate to him through wisdom. Through this relation they acquire a new life that is immortal. Since the wicked are incapable to regard mortality in faith, it becomes a limitation for them.<sup>423</sup> For those who do not have God in their lives, mortality transforms into eternal death since it, indeed, puts an end to one's life.<sup>424</sup> In this context physical death is not viewed as the antithesis of immortality, but the departure from spiritual life (or death) to immortal life (or ultimate death); it appears as the state which splits earthly life and immortality, or earthly life and ultimate death.<sup>425</sup>

### *Ultimate Death*

*Death that God did not make* (1:13) is the share of the wicked. 1:16 and 2:24b add “qualifying” statements to this notion of death, and restrict it to the wicked alone:<sup>426</sup>

ἀσεβεῖς δὲ ταῖς χερσὶν καὶ τοῖς λόγοις προσεκαλέσαντο αὐτόν  
 φίλον ἡγησάμενοι αὐτόν ἐτάκησαν  
 καὶ συνθήκην ἔθεντο πρὸς αὐτόν  
 ὅτι ἄξιοί εἰσιν τῆς ἐκείνου μερίδος εἶναι<sup>427</sup> (1:16).

πειράζουσιν δὲ αὐτόν οἱ τῆς ἐκείνου μερίδος ὄντες<sup>428</sup> (2:24b).

Before we go further in discussing the notion of death, we refer to another issue raised already by 1:12 and implied again by these verses: the responsibility of the wicked in their fate. The connection between Hades and the earth is established by the ungodly who invite death.<sup>429</sup> A

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<sup>423</sup> Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 163-165.

<sup>424</sup> According to some scholars the author is not interested in physical death; see Wright, “Wisdom,” 560; Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life*, 88. This is true, on the one hand, in the sense that physical death does not make a change in people's life, but they continue the existence or non-existence they already shared on earth. But on the other hand, as it was shown above, man's attitude towards mortality has a great impact on life: it is man's view on earthly life and death that starts the way towards eternal death or life.

<sup>425</sup> See more about death as departure at anthropology.

<sup>426</sup> Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 146-148.

<sup>427</sup> But the ungodly by their words and deeds summoned death; considering him a friend, they pined away and made a covenant with him, because they are fit to belong to his company.

<sup>428</sup> And those who belong to his company experience it.

<sup>429</sup> Amir, “The Figure of Death,” 162, note 31: αὐτόν in 1:16a “refers to the Hades mentioned in v. 14.”

second statement however connects death to the devil, thus conferring the responsibility to the figure of devil:

φθόνῳ δὲ διαβόλου θάνατος εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον<sup>430</sup> (2:24a).

Does this verse free the wicked from responsibility? 2:24 forms an inclusion with 1:16, and we seem to face a paradox here.<sup>431</sup> But a look at 1:16a and 2:24b clarifies that death is not coming into the world freely; death “is not free to interfere with earthly conditions . . . The real initiative for Death’s entrance into the world must proceed from within the world.”<sup>432</sup> This leads to two conclusions. Firstly, it emphasizes the responsibility of the wicked. The wicked make a covenant with death (1:16), and “they are fit to belong to his company.” Τῆς ἐκείνου μερίδος εἶναι and οἱ τῆς ἐκείνου μερίδος ὄντες in 1:16d and 2:24b expresses that the wicked belong to the company of the evil because they are evil, rather than because they were somehow enchanted by him. This context changes the connotation of 2:24a, making the wicked responsible for their own fate.<sup>433</sup> It

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<sup>430</sup> But through the devil's envy death entered the world.

<sup>431</sup> Seeley, “Narrative, the Righteous Man and the Philosopher,” 60, recognizes the contrast between 1:16 where the wicked appear to have made a covenant with death and 2:1-20 where they “seem utterly unaware of any covenant.” His proposed solution is that the author attempted to combine the narrative traditions from Hebrew and Hellenistic culture, and despite of the tension between these two patterns, he tried to create a new story. From the perspective of Greek tradition, death entered the world because of the failure of the philosophers to recognize God behind creation, while according to the Jewish thought, death entered the world because of the sin of idolatry (“Narrative, the Righteous Man and the Philosopher,” 60-61). Cf. 2:1-5; 13:1-5 and 1:16; also chaps. 13-15. While this may be true, if we accept the idea that the covenant in 1:16 is the outcome of the words and deeds of the wicked described in 2:1-20, there will not be any disparity between 1:16 and 2:1-20 on the textual level. Thus, the ungodly who grumble and do unrighteous deeds unconsciously incur the covenant with death. 1:16 is the author’s reflection on the words and deeds of the wicked that cannot see the consequences of their speech until the judgment scene in chap. 5. For the rhetorical purpose of 1:16, see Joseph R. Dodson, “Locked-Out Lovers: Wisdom of Solomon 1.16 in Light of the Paraclausithyron Motif,” *JSP* 17 (2007): 34-35.

<sup>432</sup> Amir, “The Figure of Death,” 161. Note that our main focus is not how and why death entered the world, but its impact on the world.

<sup>433</sup> Amir, “The Figure of Death,” 161-165. Amir, “The Figure of Death,” 163-164, also goes on to say that the author does not give any explanation why some men are wicked, but “in any case, he will not say, in conformity with Qumran theology, that they are wicked because they are under the Devil’s rule. For him, the contrary is true: they have made Satan their overlord, and they belong to this flock because ‘they are worthy to be of his portion.’” Amir’s conclusion is in line with our description of the wicked’s involvement with the evil, which leads from grumbling to the covenant with death. See also John P. Weisengoff, “Death and Immortality in the Book of Wisdom,” *CBQ* 3 (1941): 107. McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 64-66, has a similar opinion, saying that the wicked consciously made a covenant with death to escape God’s judgment (based partly on the background text of Isa 28:15). Seeley, “Narrative, the Righteous Man and the Philosopher,” 60, however, had a different view, saying that the “possibility that it [the covenant] might save them in some way

is the grumbling of the wicked, their evil thoughts and heart, and their separation from God that leads them to sign a pact with the evil.

The picture that shows the involvement of the wicked with death suggests their fondness. Ἐτάκησαν<sup>434</sup> in 1:16 describes “the emotional attachment of the wicked to their overlord.”<sup>435</sup> This adds another nuance to the description of the relationship between the wicked and Hades. Not only are they friends (1:16b), but they also seem to be lovers,<sup>436</sup> and love-relation is exclusive: the wicked that are in relation with Hades, cannot be related to God as well.

The second conclusion we can draw is that earthly life is the place of decisions. At the end of their lives the wicked share what they have opted for during their earthly lives. Although they do not realize the outcome of their decisions, with an inclusion the author shows how the things the wicked enjoy during earthly life turn out to be the things of destruction. Τῆς ἐκείνου μερίδος εἶναι in the author’s reflection in 1:16d and 2:24b points to ἡ μερίς ἡμῶν of 2:9c where the wicked seize earthly pleasures. This suggests that while the wicked want to enjoy their portion in life, what they receive is, in fact, death.<sup>437</sup>

Since this notion of death is restricted to the wicked, and there is a type of death that is experienced by all human beings, we understand that these statements are not about mortality. If mortality would not be seen as part of human condition we could assume that *death that God did not make* is mortality, but because mortality is seen as part of the nature of human beings, this assumption is impossible.<sup>438</sup> Mortality is inherent in human nature, and it does not exclude

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is discounted by the immediately following 2.1-20”; here it appears that the wicked “seem utterly unaware of any covenant.”

<sup>434</sup> Melt, dissolve.

<sup>435</sup> Amir, “The Figure of Death,” 164.

<sup>436</sup> Dodson in his article, “Locked-Out Lovers,” 21-35, compares Wis 1:16 to the Greco-Roman motif of paraclausithyron; an allusion to this commonly employed motif in Greek and Latin poetry “would show the extent of the fools’ commitment to evil,” and could have been understood by the audience of Wis (21).

<sup>437</sup> McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 68.

<sup>438</sup> Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 70, connects 2:24 with 2:20 and concludes that 2:24 refers to physical death. Hayman, “The Survival of Mythology,” 130-131, agrees with Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 146-148, that 1:13 might refer to ultimate death or second death, but according to him because of the connection with 3:1ff, 2:24 refers to physical death and not ultimate death; it is physical death that is contrasted with immortality. Hayman is right that the wicked are concerned with physical death; however, I agree with Kolarcik, contrary to Reider and Hayman, that 2:24 refers to ultimate death. Firstly, the parallel between 1:16 and 2:24 points to

immortality (7:1-7ff). But the type of death the author warns us against is related to the wicked. It is a different notion of death, one that excludes immortality. This is the death that God did not make (1:13), the death that is linked to Hades' kingdom (1:14). As we develop the definition of the *death that God did not make*, we will see that even this notion of death, which is linked to the wicked, has nuances. There is a notion that can be called spiritual death,<sup>439</sup> which starts to work on the wicked during their earthly life already. There is a notion that implies the feature of punishment. And there is a notion that focuses on the “finality” of the separation from God and the cosmos. This latest notion can be called ultimate death.<sup>440</sup>

As the scene of God's judgment describes it (5:17-23), the condemnation of the wicked results in their total destruction. This implies the definitive separation of the wicked from God and the cosmos.<sup>441</sup> This is the qualitative feature of the death of the wicked, but we also have to refer to the quantitative feature of their state, the question whether this ultimate destruction is an eternal state of the wicked, and if it is, what this eternal state implies.

ὅτι ῥήξει αὐτοὺς ἀφώνους πρηνεῖς  
καὶ σαλεύσει αὐτοὺς ἐκ θεμελίων  
καὶ ἕως ἐσχάτου χερσωθήονται  
καὶ ἔσονται ἐν ὀδύνῃ  
καὶ ἡ μνήμη αὐτῶν ἀπολείται<sup>442</sup> (4:19c-g).

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a similar notion of death in these verses. Secondly, 2:20 and 2:24 talk about different types of death: while 2:17-20 describes the physical death of the righteous, 2:24 describes the future of the wicked; and these two types of death cannot be the same. So the opposition between 3:1ff and 2:24 is between ultimate death and immortality. Thirdly, 3:1ff is also linked to 2:17-20 and not only to 2:24; by this link the author shows that the righteous' death is not what it seems because God delivered him from the hand of the wicked. Thus here, too, the opposition is not between physical death and immortality, but between what the wicked and the author think about mortality; the reader is called upon to judge between the two attitudes, as Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 108-113, notices.

<sup>439</sup> Note that the term *spiritual death* is not used by the author (nor is *ultimate death*), but it reflects my understanding of the notion of death that is described as lack of communion with wisdom which results in wickedness and destruction; see 5:6-7, 13, etc.

<sup>440</sup> See Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 174-178, who uses the term to refer to the “ultimate and final separation from God and the cosmos” (163).

<sup>441</sup> Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 163, 175.

<sup>442</sup> Because he will dash them speechless to the ground, and shake them from the foundations; they will be left utterly dry and barren and they will be in pain, and the memory of them will perish.

4:19 describes the death of the wicked, pointing back to their false reasoning in 2:1b-5.<sup>443</sup> The author actually uses the words of the wicked to project their negative future, but what the wicked considered as physical death in chap. 2 turns out to be ultimate death. We can see the total destruction of the wicked in 4:19-20. The author definitely refers here to ultimate death, and not to mortality.<sup>444</sup> Δι' αἰῶνος (4:19b) is used to describe the state of the wicked after destruction; however, the meaning of the term is not as explicit as in the references to God and the righteous.<sup>445</sup> Since here it does not refer to God, nor is the accusative of time used, it may not have the meaning of eternity in an absolute sense. Ἔσονται ἐν ὀδύνῃ<sup>446</sup> could suggest an eternal suffering contrasted to the state of the righteous being at peace (3:3b). But the rest of the verse seems to stand in opposition to this meaning: the corpses of the wicked will be dashed to the ground; they will be “dry and barren.”<sup>447</sup> This image of destruction calls into life again the agricultural metaphor. As we have described above, God is viewed as the king of the cosmos; he is the protector and provider of fertility and prosperity. If he withdraws his life-giving power, people remain barren and dry, which means that they have no life in themselves. So we understand that the wicked, which are left barren and dry, do not have life but they cease to exist. And this non-existence is the result of their separation from God, the provider of life.

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<sup>443</sup> See the analysis below at the anthropology.

<sup>444</sup> There are difficulties in interpreting 4:15-20. Some scholars understand it as the moment of physical death after which judgment follows in 5:1-23; others understand it as discussion on the theme of judgment which anticipates the ultimate judgment scene in 5:1-23. See the different interpretations in McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 73, n. 68.

<sup>445</sup> The accusative of time (see 5:15) has the connotation of the more absolute concept of eternity (see Ramelli and Konstan, *Terms for Eternity*, 48), but δι' αἰῶνος, through ages, probably does not refer to eternity in an absolute sense. It is also noteworthy what Ramelli and Konstan, *Terms for Eternity*, 48-50, observe, namely, that 4 Maccabees uses both αἰώνιος and αἰδίος for eternal life (4 Macc 10:15; 15:3), but the technical term, αἰδίος, is never used with reference to death or retribution; here he applies αἰώνιος (4 Macc 9:9; 10:25; 12:12; 13:15).

<sup>446</sup> The scholarly opinion is divided whether this verse refers to retribution after death or retribution already began on earth; see Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 88. In the immediate context of judgment after death the interpretation as retribution after death seems more probable. However, we will see that spiritual death already begins on earth.

<sup>447</sup> See John J. Collins, “The Mysteries of God: Creation and Eschatology in 4QInstruction and the Wisdom of Solomon,” in *Wisdom and Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the Biblical Tradition*, ed. Florentino García Martínez, BETL 168 (Leuven: Leuven University Press; Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 292. For a contrary opinion, see Ziener, “Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium,” 39-40.



Another metaphor that suggests the total destruction of the wicked is what we see in καὶ ἡ μνήμη αὐτῶν ἀπολεῖται. This metaphor takes us even further in the concept of death and immortality. “The memory of them will perish” defines the fate of the wicked as a state of non-existence, a condition affecting not only their life but even their memory. What the wicked projected in 2:2b comes true: they will be as if they had never been; their life, works, names and memory will disappear. This also suggests that ultimate death is not just the death of the soul, but it extends to the whole person and a person’s life. In dealing with the traditions behind the *living water* in the Johannine corpus, Stovell<sup>448</sup> reflects on the lake of Mnemosyne that “represents a way to eternal life through the recollection of memory” in the Orphic tradition.<sup>449</sup> In contrast to Mnemosyne, Lethe is the river of forgetfulness, loss, and death.<sup>450</sup> Could it be that “they will be left barren and dry” and “the memory of them will perish” in Wis 4:19 reflect this tradition (although explicit reference to water is missing here)? We can compare this perception of death with 4:1 that defines immortality in similar terms: immortality is “in the memory” of the virtuous:

κρείσσων ἀτεκνία μετὰ ἀρετῆς

ἀθανασία γάρ ἐστιν ἐν μνήμῃ αὐτῆς

ὅτι καὶ παρὰ θεῶν γινώσκεται καὶ παρὰ ἀνθρώποις<sup>451</sup>

While death in the case of the wicked is described in terms of their perishing remembrance, the immortality of the righteous is linked to their everlasting memory. Those days existence was linked to remembrance; living in the memory of people meant immortality (cf. 8:13). Perdue,

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<sup>448</sup> Beth M. Stovell, “Rivers, Springs, and Wells of Living Water: Metaphorical Transformation in the Johannine Corpus,” *Christian Origins and Hellenistic Judaism: Social and Literary Context for the New Testament*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Andrew W. Pitts, vol. 2 of *Early Christianity in Its Hellenistic Context*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Andrew W. Pitts, TENT 10 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 461-491.

<sup>449</sup> Stovell, “Rivers, Springs, and Wells of Living Water,” 475.

<sup>450</sup> For this, see Charles E. Scott, “Mnemosyne and Lethe: Memory, Jung, Phenomenology,” in *Pathways into the Jungian World: Phenomenology and Analytical Psychology*, ed. Roger Brooke (London: Routledge, 2000), 139-156, who describes Lethe as follows: “the flow of Lethe creates, as it were, a desert without springing life because this water does not nourish or quench. It makes dry, gives no satisfaction, will not become a life-giving source to any organism” (143).

<sup>451</sup> Better than this is childlessness with virtue, for in the memory of virtue is immortality, because it is known both by God and by mortals.

who argues that the author was a skilled rhetor,<sup>452</sup> notes that in Wis 3:1-9 and 4:10-19, where the righteous lies in the hand of God after death, the author uses eulogia, “a specific type of speech of praise offered in remembrance of the glorious dead, their accomplishments, and virtues.”<sup>453</sup> In contrast, the comparative sayings in Wis 5:9–14 shows the fate of the wicked as “swift disappearance and erasure from memory” at death.<sup>454</sup>

Remembrance in the Bible is never linked to the past things alone, but it is related to the present and future as well.<sup>455</sup> It is “constitutive of identity and determinative of conduct.”<sup>456</sup> Remembrance does not refer to a passive recollection; “in remembering the covenant, God establishes an identity and it is faithful to it, determines a cause, and acts in accordance with it.”<sup>457</sup> God’s remembrance is, thus, linked to salvation and judgment.<sup>458</sup> If we translate this to Wis, we could say that God remembers the creation, that he created everything for living (1:14; 2:23). Therefore he will always act to save the righteous and judge the wicked. But there is a second issue here: the Bible says that God remembers the sins of the people and punishes them (Ps 137:7);<sup>459</sup> if God does not remember people’s sins, they are saved. This second point affirms that was already included in the first: if God remembers an entity or event, that entity or event exists or, in other words, it is present. Reider says, “to be known by God involves a measure of immortality, for any thing (*sic*) that has existed in the mind of God and has been approved by Him can never become as though it had not been.”<sup>460</sup> If God does not remember an entity or event, that entity or event does not exist, at least from the perspective of God, and since

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<sup>452</sup> Leo G. Perdue, “Rhetoric and the Art of Persuasion in the Wisdom of Solomon,” in Porter and Pitts, *Christian Origins and Hellenistic Judaism*, 341-371.

<sup>453</sup> Perdue, “Rhetoric and the Art of Persuasion,” 368.

<sup>454</sup> Perdue, “Rhetoric and the Art of Persuasion,” 368.

<sup>455</sup> Allen Verhey, “Remember, Remembrance,” *ABD* 5:667.

<sup>456</sup> Verhey, *ABD* 5:667.

<sup>457</sup> Verhey, *ABD* 5:667.

<sup>458</sup> Remembrance and salvation is also linked to knowledge. Goering, “Election and Knowledge,” 179 n. 57, notes that “the night of judgment on the Egyptians was made known beforehand to the Israelites (ἐκείνη ἡ νύξ προεγνώσθη πατράσιν ἡμῶν; 18:6), and as people in the know, the Israelites expected their own deliverance as well as the destruction of the Egyptians (18:7). In contrast to the Egyptians who forgot the plagues that had happened to them only moments earlier (19:4-5), the Israelites remembered (ἐμνήμηντο) and therefore praised God for deliverance (19:9-10).”

<sup>459</sup> O. Michel, “Mimnēskomai,” *TDNT*, 596; Verhey, *ABD* 5:668.

<sup>460</sup> Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 80. See also Wright, “Wisdom,” 560.

immortality is defined in terms of relation with God, this means that the wicked do not exist.<sup>461</sup> The righteous on the contrary, will always be remembered by God; therefore they will always exist or be present with God.<sup>462</sup>

4:1c mentions that virtue “is known both by God and by mortals.” This leads to two conclusions: on the one hand, it implies that virtue is regarded as a value from both the perspective of God and that of men. It is the quality that connects people to God; if they remember virtue, people behave and act in accordance with the virtuous God.<sup>463</sup> On the other hand, it implies the perspective of immortality with regard to the virtuous on two levels: earthly remembrance and eternal life in the heavenly realm.

We read a similar idea in 8:13:

ἔξω δι’ αὐτήν  
ἀθανασίαν  
καὶ  
μνήμην αἰώνιον  
τοῖς μετ’ ἐμὲ ἀπολείψω<sup>464</sup>

The chiasm identifies immortality with everlasting remembrance.<sup>465</sup> However, these texts do not only refer to immortality as a remembrance as some of the scholars suggested, but also to the immortality proper because being known by God means life.<sup>466</sup> Most probably it refers to both earthly remembrance (the context supports this; cf. 10:14) and immortality.

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<sup>461</sup> See the chapter on immortality as presence with God.

<sup>462</sup> Cf. Ps 112:6; Prov 10:7; Job 18:17; Sir 15:6; 41:13; Qoh 1:11.

<sup>463</sup> See also the value system of the righteous below.

<sup>464</sup> Because of her I shall have immortality, and leave an everlasting remembrance to those who come after me.

<sup>465</sup> Cf. Gilbert, “The Origins,” 177.

<sup>466</sup> See Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 131, and Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 98-99, that view 8:13 as referring to God’s gift of eternal life and draw a parallel with John 1:4.

Thus, the end of the wicked is described as the destruction of the body, soul and memory. These arguments strengthen the assumption that being in Hades' world may not refer to the state of eternal suffering, but it means that the wicked cease to exist.<sup>467</sup>

Another issue is that if we accept that the wicked cease to exist, what is the meaning of the apocalyptic judgment scene in chap. 5? Does this mean that they are not annihilated in 4:19<sup>468</sup> or this refers only to an intermediary state after which they cease to exist?<sup>469</sup> Perhaps the weightiest argument against the concept of ultimate death as eternal suffering is that since life is defined as life with God,<sup>470</sup> death, therefore, should have the meaning of *ceasing to exist* at least in the sense that defines life in terms of life with God.<sup>471</sup> However, as we mentioned above, Wis is not clear about many questions regarding its eschatology; it seems that the author is combining traditional elements with new ideas without any intention to develop a consistent eschatological timetable. What we can deduce from the text is that what happens to the wicked in 4:19 is exactly the future they projected for themselves in 2:2-5; thus by using the words of the wicked, a total annihilation seems to be forecasted by the author.<sup>472</sup>

### *Physical Death as Punishment*

The verses we analysed with regard to ultimate death let us see another nuance of death: the sense of punishment.<sup>473</sup> The wicked will be shattered and destroyed (4:19), and they experience their physical death in a way they projected earlier in 2:1-5. They consider physical death as, in

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<sup>467</sup> See Collins, "Apocalyptic Eschatology in Philosophical Dress," 100-101.

<sup>468</sup> As Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 38, concludes from the scene of judgment (4:20-5:1ff) and 4:19 (they will be in pain).

<sup>469</sup> 4:19 can have a meaning of an intermediary state until the final judgment (see Puech, "The Book of Wisdom," 128), after which the wicked cease to exist.

<sup>470</sup> Roland E. Murphy, *The Tree of Life: An Exploration of Biblical Wisdom Literature*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 86: "It appears as if immortality is so positive a concept (life with God before and beyond death) that the wicked are considered not to live on in any real sense." See also the section on immortality as upward orientation.

<sup>471</sup> Another argument would be that eternal suffering is very often related to bodily resurrection, and this does not explicitly appear in Wis, although there could be argued — as some of the scholars do — that the idea is implicitly present; see the discussion on 3:7 in the section about immortality as light. See also the discussion on the physical notion of ἀφθαρσία.

<sup>472</sup> Because of this understanding of eternal death, we use the terms *ultimate death* and *eternal death* interchangeably to define the notion of death that implies ultimate separation from God and the cosmos, as well as the cessation of existence.

<sup>473</sup> See Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 171-174.

the words of Kolarcik, “a disastrous and final end of human destiny” that “destroys any value or meaning for virtuous life.”<sup>474</sup> Kolarcik further argues that the wicked’s experience of physical death is contingent of their thinking. 3:10 clearly says that “the ungodly will be punished as their reasoning deserves”; similarly, the death of Israel’s enemies is conceived as punishment in the Exodus story (chaps. 11-19).<sup>475</sup> Thus, the ultimate separation from God, i.e. ultimate death involves both the destruction of a person (1:11) and the experience of physical death as punishment (4:19). The just, on the contrary, will experience physical death “as a passage to divine beatitude.”<sup>476</sup>

### *In the Dynamic of Spiritual Death*

Finally, we see another nuance of ultimate death: ultimate death *comes into the world* as spiritual death.<sup>477</sup> The wicked are drawn into the “dynamic of evil”<sup>478</sup> that starts with grumbling (2:1-5) and ends in ultimate death (1:3-16).<sup>479</sup> The sins of the tongue is mentioned 11 times in chap. 1; thus it suggests the force (destroying—in this case) of the words. These texts show that evil deeds start from wrong thinking and grumbling, which develop a “dynamic of evil.” The sins enlisted in the first two chapters, perverse thoughts (1:3; 2:1), grumbling (1:10; 2:1-5), blaspheming (1:6), evil deeds (1:12; 2:6-12) and murder (2:12ff) imply the opposition to God’s will, and, furthermore, the destruction of the order implemented in the world since they are

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<sup>474</sup> Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 171.

<sup>475</sup> Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 171-174. See also Raurell, “From ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗ to ΑΘΑΝΑΣΙΑ,” 334.

<sup>476</sup> Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 171. The wicked experience all the aspects of death they projected to themselves: they will be forgotten (4:19f compared to 2:4ab), and they will perish (4:19 compared to 2:3). Moreover, physical death appears here in the picture of destruction.

<sup>477</sup> I interpret the death that entered the world through the devil’s envy as spiritual death that is the state of being in relation with Hades and being separated from God during earthly life. In this way we distinguish between the separation of the wicked from God on earth, and their final separation that is ultimate death. For the scholars who interpret death in an ethical sense, as spiritual death, see R. J. Taylor, “The Eschatological Meaning of Life and Death in the Book of Wisdom 1-5,” *ETL* 42 (1966): 102-113, and Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 148-151.

<sup>478</sup> Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 164, 176, coined the term “dynamic of evil.” I feel that the “dynamic of evil” exposes only one side of the consequences of grumbling, namely, that the wicked are involved more and more in evil deeds, whereas spiritual death also shows that death has begun to work on their soul. Spiritual death can be contrasted with the spiritual life of the righteous on earth.

<sup>479</sup> Similar patten we can see in 2:12-24; the grumbling of the wicked leads to evil deeds and finally their judgment. For the relation between the belief/worldview and actions of the wicked, see Ziener, “Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium,” 51.

against the principle of goodness (1:1) and well-being (1:14). This is a process of separation from God, and since there is no life separately from God, the wicked die spiritually.

ἄρα ἐπλανήθημεν ἀπὸ ὁδοῦ ἀληθείας  
καὶ τὸ τῆς δικαιοσύνης φῶς οὐκ ἐπέλαμψεν ἡμῖν  
καὶ ὁ ἥλιος οὐκ ἀνέτειλεν ἡμῖν  
ἀνομίας ἐνεπλήσθημεν τρίβοις καὶ ἀπωλείας  
καὶ διωδεύσαμεν ἐρήμους ἀβάτους  
τὴν δὲ ὁδὸν κυρίου οὐκ ἐπέγνωμεν<sup>480</sup> (5:6-7).

The context is the judgment scene in chap. 5. The text is part of the speech of the wicked; it expresses their reaction after facing the righteous. It is the moment of truth in two senses: the moment when God judges the wicked and the moment when the wicked find out the truth. The chiasm of 6a/7c closes around the two parallels in 6bc and 7ab identifying the way of the Lord with the way of the truth. So we learn that the wicked were slowly destroyed in their wickedness because they were not walking the path of God.<sup>481</sup>

As a conclusion there comes their final remark:

οὕτως καὶ ἡμεῖς γενηθέντες ἐξελίπομεν  
καὶ ἀρετῆς μὲν σημεῖον οὐδὲν ἔσχομεν δεῖξαι  
ἐν δὲ τῇ κακίᾳ ἡμῶν κατεδαπανήθημεν<sup>482</sup> (5:13).

These statements on the one hand point to spiritual death, and on the other hand they define life as life with God. Since the wicked are not in communion with God, they cease to exist. The texts say that the wicked did not have “the light of righteousness,” and they ceased to exist. If we connect this to chap. 1, we can see that this happened because they were evil. Since the

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<sup>480</sup> So it was we who strayed from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness did not shine on us, and the sun did not rise upon us. We took our fill of the paths of lawlessness and destruction, and we journeyed through trackless deserts, but the way of the Lord we have not known.

<sup>481</sup> See the explanation of the metaphor of way below at the anthropology.

<sup>482</sup> So we also, as soon as we were born, ceased to be, and we had no sign of virtue to show, but were consumed in our wickedness.

unrighteous start grumbling (1:2-10, 16), they lose connection with God (1:3) because wisdom does not enter their soul.

ὅτι

εἰς κακότεχνον ψυχὴν  
οὐκ εἰσελεύσεται  
σοφία  
οὐδὲ κατοικήσει  
ἐν σώματι κατάχρεω ἁμαρτίας<sup>483</sup> (1:4).

The chiasm formed by the two clauses emphasizes that wickedness separates one from wisdom. And since wisdom does not enter the soul of the wicked, they get separated from God, as well. The moment they are not in relation with God anymore, they are connected to Hades and they finalize their relationship with Hades by making a covenant with death (1:16).<sup>484</sup> Thus the wicked start living in two worlds: they are living on the earth, but also in the kingdom of Hades. The description of this process of involvement with evil seems to have the implication that the wicked lose their communion with God before making covenant with death. However, the loss of communion with God is none other than the covenant with death; those who are not living in righteousness are already dead (5:6-13).<sup>485</sup> There is no middle position; if one is not in communion with God, he must be in communion with death. The images that seem to develop a chronology of human fall (1:3-11)<sup>486</sup> in fact serve to emphasize the responsibility of the wicked and depict their gradual separation from God as their wickedness is increasing. Because they are separated from God, the wicked experience spiritual death already on earth<sup>487</sup> and after their physical death, they will experience death in its totality: God destroys their soul and they go to Hades (see 1:11; 2:24b). Thus spiritual death becomes the antecedent of ultimate death just like

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<sup>483</sup> Because wisdom will not enter an evil soul or dwell in a sinful body [own trans.].

<sup>484</sup> Amir, "The Figure of Death," 166: "Our author, because of his philosophical training, knows that the link between *Thanatos* and the wicked cannot have occurred in historical time but must be part of the human condition in general; therefore the covenant is allotted a place in the primordial time of Creation, where, as documented by Isaiah, it provides a necessary link towards understanding the process of depravation of the original God-willed world."

<sup>485</sup> Puech, "The Book of Wisdom," 128: "death has already started to do its work in the here below."

<sup>486</sup> See the unrighteous' separation from God in the section on the kingship of God.

<sup>487</sup> Cf. Philo, *Leg.* 1.106.

spiritual life is the antecedent of eternal life.<sup>488</sup> The relation between spiritual and eternal death can be explained as follows: while spiritual death separates one from God on earth as the result of what can be called an earthly judgment or examination, ultimate death is the final separation from God as the result of final judgment.

In conclusion death is a complex term in Wis; it cannot be interpreted as mortality, spiritual death, physical death as punishment or ultimate death alone. All these connotations together form the picture of death in Wis. But while mortality is linked to all human beings as part of the human condition, spiritual death, ultimate death and physical death as punishment are different aspects of another notion that expresses the idea of death in terms of separation from God. The earthly separation of the wicked from God is expressed by the term spiritual death, whereas the final separation from God that comes with physical death is expressed by ultimate death. Since this notion of death implies separation from God, physical death will be experienced as punishment by the wicked.

### 2.1.3 The Earth

The eternal God created the earth (9:1-2, 9; 13:1-5),<sup>489</sup> the sphere of human beings. We have looked at the moment of creation when discussing the image of the Creator God; in this section we extend the description of the creation and point out the factors that limit and the factors that free human beings in this context.

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<sup>488</sup> See also Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life*, 88: death is “a characteristic inherent in the ungodly.” “Inherent” here does not refer to nature of man’s soul since, as Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life*, 179, correctly notes, both immortality and death are “a result of his actions in this life. Therefore it is the soul of only the righteous that is immortal.” See also Ziener, “Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium,” 43-44, 48-49.

<sup>489</sup> Is it created ex nihilo or out of formless matter? Winston argues that creation “out of formless matter” in Wis 11:17 means that the formless matter itself was eternal and not created by God; thus he probably does not talk about creation ex nihilo—this concept was not part of Jewish or Greek thinking of that time (*The Wisdom of Solomon*, 38-39). See also Hayman, “The Survival of Mythology,” 127-129. However, Heinisch, *Theology of the Old Testament*, 143, argues, that God created this formless matter as well. In any case the cosmology does not change, since even in the latter case God is the one who gave form and life to the formless matter and made a kingdom. See also McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 32: “The dualism implied by the author’s use of this concept, however, in no way compromises God’s role as creator. . . . Far from imposing some limitation upon God’s might, it is our author’s objective to illustrate the full range of God’s power.” Cf. McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 33-50.



The created earth is the space where human beings live and act. The earth appears as a kingdom that is under God's sovereignty (6:4). Man is appointed to rule over the earth, which means rule over his fellow human beings as well (6:3; 9:2-3, 7, 12).<sup>490</sup> However, God is the most high (6:4a; 9:4ff; 12:12-16; 5:17-23),<sup>491</sup> the king of kings.<sup>492</sup> This, on the one hand, expresses man's subordination to God, while, on the other hand, it expresses that man, similarly to creation, is linked to God. But we will see that this latter point also implies the possibilities that open up for man in this relationship.

As God's creation, the earth is set in a timeframe that is different from God's eternity. Due to its created nature, the earth has a beginning (9:1-2). This aspect of its timeframe displays a limitedness that extends to all the created things as well; so even the human life that is bond to creation is limited. Thus, although the creation is the area of opportunities for man, it also limits man's possibilities (chaps. 7-9).<sup>493</sup> The different timeframes of God's realm and that of the earth show a creational contrast between the Creator and his sphere on the one side, and the earth and human beings on the other side (9:16). Wis text illustrates this contrast via the orientational metaphors that picture the Kingdom of God up and the earth down.<sup>494</sup> But God planned and created human beings with the possibility of transgressing this limitedness. 1:14 describes the idea on which the creation is based, and this includes the concept of immortality:

ἔκτισεν γὰρ εἰς τὸ εἶναι τὰ πάντα  
καὶ σωτήριοι αἱ γενέσεις τοῦ κόσμου  
καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν αὐταῖς φάρμακον ὀλέθρου  
οὔτε ἄδου βασίλειον ἐπὶ γῆς<sup>495</sup> (1:14).

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<sup>490</sup> The theme of regality is discussed below in detail since it has a great importance for the concept of immortality.

<sup>491</sup> Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 152: "That kings rule and are deposed at God's pleasure was accepted biblical doctrine"; see, for example, I Chr 29:11-12; Dan 2:21; Sir 10:4, 8; John 19:11.

<sup>492</sup> See Agamemnon referred to as "the king of kings," in Seneca, *Ag.* 39. 291.

<sup>493</sup> G. W. Bromiley, "Anthropology," *ISBE* 1:135.

<sup>494</sup> See more about this topic at the discussion on the Kingdom of God.

<sup>495</sup> For he created all things in order that they might exist and the generations of the world are salvific/healthful and there is no poison of destruction in them, nor the dominion of Hades is on earth [own trans.].

The verse serves as explanation of why death should not be sought (1:12) and extends what was said in 1:13: “God did not make death” and he does not want the death of the living. There is a parallel and two chiasmus imbedded in the verse, which makes the author’s statement imperative. The first two lines parallel each other explaining that God’s creation was meant for living. 1:14b then extends this by asserting that this is a present quality of the creation. The next line forms a chiasm with 1:14b; σωτήριοι is extended by οὐκ ἔστιν φάρμακον ὀλέθρου. This sets the creation as well in contrast with death and its kingdom.<sup>496</sup> As we explained above, the two last lines also form a chiasm, emphasizing the negation of death in relation to the cosmos.

Death is not on earth because God created the world for living; death is not part of his creation, neither of his plans. Because of God’s creative act (8:1; 9:1-2), the creation is salvific.<sup>497</sup> God created the world with an implanted order “which is directed to salvation and well-being.”<sup>498</sup> “Salvation and judgment are not divorced from the workings of the world but are a necessary consequence of the way the world is ordered.”<sup>499</sup> Εἰς τὸ εἶναι implies that “God created all things to partake of His own nature, which is basically Being.”<sup>500</sup> Although the verse first of all refers to humankind (cf. 11:26),<sup>501</sup> τὰ πάντα shows a reflection on the state of the whole cosmos,

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<sup>496</sup> We have argued that Wis does not deny the reality of physical death; on the contrary, it states the limitedness of human beings. So the death that Wis denies here is ultimate death. Ziener, “Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium,” 44, understands destruction as “loss of communion with God” [own trans.].

<sup>497</sup> Cf. Gen 1:10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31. The creation is salvific because God created it; see Kolarcik, “Creation and Salvation,” 101; Raurell, “From ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗ to ΘΘΑΝΑΣΙΑ,” 345, 347. For the philosophical background of the idea, see Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 60.

<sup>498</sup> Collins, “Cosmos and Salvation,” 320. According to Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 68 (he draws on F. R. Tennant, “The Teaching of Ecclesiasticus and Wisdom on the Introduction of Sin and Death,” *JTS* 2 [1901]: 218), σωτήριοι αἱ γενέσεις (γενέσεις read as *birth*) alludes to the Epicurean idea of the “enduring quality of the species . . . the only kind of immortality recognized by the Epicureans.” Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 68 n. 164, explains: “Pagan philosophy linked incorruptibility to the order of the universe as a whole, because this is what maintained the necessary harmony of the elements; see Ps-Aristotle, *De mundo*, 397a17-18.” Wis also links the immortality to the order of the universe; this order, however, is implanted by God, and the immortality comprised in Wis is more than the permanence of species. It is a gift of God; see also Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 68. For the background of the expression, see also Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 108-109.

<sup>499</sup> Collins, “Cosmos and Salvation,” 322.

<sup>500</sup> Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 57. On incorruption as man’s original condition, see also Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 66; Gilbert, “The Origins,” 172-173.

<sup>501</sup> See Weisengoff, “Death and Immortality,” 120, who argues that it is possible to relate εἰς τὸ εἶναι to ζώντων (1:13b); cf. also Paul Heinisch, *Das Buch der Weisheit*, EHAT 24 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1912), 22-33. For an opposite opinion, see Ziener, “Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium,” 43-44, who believes that Wis speaks here about “the irrational creation” alone, which has salvific function.

too.<sup>502</sup> What conclusions can we draw from this statement with regards to the timeframe of the creation? Wis does not clarify the question whether the creation is eternal.<sup>503</sup> However, we may find the answer if we look at the role of creation in Wis.

Firstly, the creation is the context of salvation that is the context where human beings can recognize and meet the Creator by wisdom (7-9; 13:1-5).<sup>504</sup> Secondly, the presence of wisdom in the world (1:7; 8:1; 12:1) links the world to God so that the earth does not only belong to God as his creation, but it is always good and in harmony with its Creator.<sup>505</sup> Notwithstanding the appearance of death on earth (1:16a; 2:24a),<sup>506</sup> God remains the king of the earth, and the earthly kingdom is still affirmed to be positive (1:14). Amir has a plausible idea about the use of present tense in 1:14: “Even though the wicked have interfered with God’s plan, the principles on which He created His world are still considered as valid.” And he goes on, “the eternity of the universe, established by the act of creation itself, holds good even now.”<sup>507</sup> 1:14 linked to 5:17-23 states this cosmological principle that the creation is always good and assists God in his work<sup>508</sup> (5:20-

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<sup>502</sup> Cf. 18:24 where the whole cosmos is presented to be under God’s protection. The author refers to created cosmos in 9:1b as τὰ πάντα; see Raurell, “From ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗ to ἈΘΑΝΑΣΙΑ,” 345 n. 38. “This opening verse of the prayer of Solomon [9:1-2a] duplicates the double notion of creation in Genesis 1; that is, the creation of the cosmos and of humanity,” says Kolarcik, “Creation and Salvation,” 102 n. 10. Collins, “The Mysteries of God,” 300, argues that “while Wisdom never expounds a doctrine of double creation, such as we find in Philo, there is some evidence that it associates the immortality of the soul with Gen 1,27 and the mortality of the body with Gen 2,7.”

<sup>503</sup> Collins, “Apocalyptic Eschatology in Philosophical Dress,” 104: “It is not apparent, however, that the Wisdom of Solomon actually envisions an end of history. The judgment scene in chapter five can be understood as the judgment of the dead. It does not require that history, and this world as we know it, have passed away.”

<sup>504</sup> Collins, “Cosmos and Salvation,” 320-330.

<sup>505</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 128: “All things are good because God’s ‘Spirit’ is in all.”

<sup>506</sup> Kolarcik, “Creation and Salvation,” 99: the coming of death into the world is “the prime negative image for eliciting the pursuit of virtue and justice.”

<sup>507</sup> Amir, “The Figure of Death,” 174. Amir, “The Figure of Death,” 174 n. 63, also notes that he draws on Tennant, “The Teaching of Ecclesiasticus,” 220.

<sup>508</sup> Kolarcik, “Creation and Salvation,” 100-101; see also Collins, “Cosmos and Salvation,” 326-338. Passaro, “The Serpent and the Manna,” 187: “The world of nature, considered in its status as creation, is not an autonomous being. It finds itself, on the contrary, in a condition of radical openness to the Creator on whose sovereign freedom it depends. It is a situation which could be described as ‘obedient power’ because, although not having in itself the ability to produce unusual effects, the creation shows itself to be able to go beyond what seems normal for a created nature because of its dependence on the action of the Creator.” Hence the interchange of elements. See Larcher, *Le Livre*, 3:1057. Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 324: “The author employs a Greek philosophical principle in order to make the notion of miracles more plausible . . . the material interchange of elements.” Collins, “Apocalyptic Eschatology in Philosophical Dress,” 103, notes

23; 19:6; also chaps. 11-19). As the king and creator of earth, God uses his whole creation to save the righteous (16:17b) and fight against the evil (16:24a).<sup>509</sup> This also implies that the ethical contrast between God and Hades is also extended to the relationship between the earth and Hades. It is interesting to see that while the cosmos is “fashioned anew” (19:6) for the sake of the righteous, “the created order seems to be breaking down for the Egyptians” (see chaps. 11, 16-19).<sup>510</sup> “The beneficial feature of creation is a key principle in the author’s creation theology.”<sup>511</sup> This feature of the cosmology is very interesting, since the outcome of this could be that the resurrected righteous live on earth. However, it is more probable, as the orientational metaphor ALIVE IS UP shows,<sup>512</sup> that the righteous will live in the Kingdom of God and not in a restored earthly kingdom. What is then the role of the cosmos’ change and support of the righteous? I would say that its role is, firstly, to emphasize God’s power over creation (which means both cosmos and humankind) and his almightiness that is not paralleled in history, his power to create and deliver, and by this give hope to the just for their eschatological reward.<sup>513</sup> Secondly, it emphasizes the idea that the cosmos is the medium of salvation in Wis.<sup>514</sup> It is the medium through which God communicates himself and man links to God. As Collins formulates it, the “cosmos is the context of all human experience, so even religious experience and hopes

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that this, however, is not new creation. Collins, “Cosmos and Salvation,” 322: “Not only are the wicked condemned by God; they are also rejected by the forces of the cosmos.”

<sup>509</sup> This feature of the cosmos also raised the possibility that the concept of immortality includes the nuance of corporality. Puech, “The Book of Wisdom,” 130: “If the cosmos plays such a big role in the history of the salvation of the just, it is not so that the author leaves off at the salvation of the soul only. Why otherwise would God mobilise the whole cosmos?” See further Puech, “The Book of Wisdom,” 129-132.

<sup>510</sup> McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 204.

<sup>511</sup> Kolarcik, “Creation and Salvation,” 100. Kolarcik, “Creation and Salvation,” 98, also says that the cosmos “functions as a constant in the references to creation, to the exodus event, and to the apocalyptic judgment.” See also Collins, “Cosmos and Salvation,” 320: “The salvific tendency of the world is explained by the presence of righteousness in the world: ‘Neither is there a kingdom of Hades upon earth, for righteousness is immortal.’ . . . The way in which humanity is related to the salvific forces of the world is further expressed in terms of wisdom.”

<sup>512</sup> See the discussion on this metaphor below.

<sup>513</sup> See Kolarcik, “Creation and Salvation,” 101-107; Michael Kolarcik, “Universalism and Justice in the Wisdom of Solomon,” in Caldich-Benages and Vermeylen, *Treasures of Wisdom*, 300-301; Dodson, *The ‘Powers’ of Personification*, 69-81. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 126: “The retaliation of the chosen people provides assurance of God’s eschatological ‘retaliation,’ a word that occurs nowhere else in the Bible.” Cf. 5:17; 11:3.

<sup>514</sup> See Collins, “Cosmos and Salvation,” 326-330; Raurell, “From ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗ to ΑΘΑΝΑΣΙΑ,” 346. See how salvation is related to creation and history in the article of Angelo Passaro, “Cosmology and Music: Wis 19:18 and the Concept of Creation in the Book of Wisdom,” Xeravits and Zsengellér, *Studies in the Book of Wisdom*, 101-123.

are expressed in terms which make cosmological sense.”<sup>515</sup> This again takes us back to the thought that God created and ordered everything in order that they may be good and salvific. The fight of the cosmos for the righteous is in line with the thought of 1:14 that the creation is salvific.<sup>516</sup> So the hope of salvation and eternal life is based on the act and idea of creation.<sup>517</sup>

Coming back to the question of eternity, since this earthly kingdom belongs to God (see 11:26) and assists God in his saving work and judgment (5:17-23; chaps. 11-19), we may assume that the created world may also be eternal. However, this eternity would not mean eternity in a strict sense, but an eternity that has a beginning (the creation; cf. 9:1-2; 11:17) and may not have an end.

In this section it was presented that the world was created in order and harmony with the Creator. In the next passages we will see that the same holds true of human beings. Wisdom that preserves the order implanted in the world also upholds man’s communion with God. Through his wisdom the righteous man can break out of his finiteness imposed on him by his created nature (chaps. 7-9). But man’s communion with God is based on his openness towards God. Thus, although wisdom is present in the world, its acceptance is man’s choice. Man has to make this choice during his earthly life. That is how the earth becomes the context where man’s fate takes one turn or another based on their decision. According to their decision, the cosmos can become the context of salvation or the context where their judgment is set. But God’s plan was to create the cosmos as a space where his love and mercy reveals itself. Wisdom implanted in the world is an ever present possibility for human beings to enter into relation with God because when God created man, God thought of man as a creature who is in unity with him. Man can step

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<sup>515</sup> Collins, “Cosmos and Salvation,” 327.

<sup>516</sup> Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 177 n. 18. In another article Kolarcik formulates it in this way: “the Lord’s cosmic judgement points to the author’s positive explanation of creation and is a key element in the author’s didactic argument for the advantage of righteousness in human life” (“Sapiential Values and Apocalyptic Imagery,” 32).

<sup>517</sup> Kolarcik, “Creation and Salvation,” 104: “Each saving moment is a recreation. . . . [of] the conditions of creation for the just.”

out of his limitedness with the help of wisdom, who steers the righteous<sup>518</sup> into the world that knows no limits and no death, which is God's kingdom.

### *2.1.3.1 The Anthropology of the Book of Wisdom*

Our description of the creation already shed some light on the anthropology of Wis. The limitedness of man and his possibility to cross over this limitedness reflects the duality the text presents us with: man is both mortal and immortal (2:23; 3:1-9; 4:10-14). These two aspects, however, do not contradict each other, but make up a detailed picture of the nature of man: although mortal in his nature and according to his limited time on earth, man becomes immortal through his relation with God.<sup>519</sup>

#### *Man in His Mortal Nature*

Human life is complex: it encompasses mortality (7:1, 9:5, 14; 15:8-11, 16-17; 16:14), but immortality as well. What we examine in this section is earthly life that is limited and transitory. The importance of describing earthly life is to point out the contrast between the two different timeframes that characterize the realm of God and that of the earth; moreover, the metaphors that describe earthly life also display some aspects of eternal life. As we will see, the aspects of mortality and immortality also include two ways of existence, namely, an earthly, physical existence and a spiritual existence in communion with wisdom in the realm of God. These two ways of existence may or may not contradict each other. In the case of the wicked that are not in communion with God, the earthly way of existence excludes spiritual existence in the realm of God, whereas in the case of the righteous, these two levels of existence form together what can be called a human life according to the order of God.

The reasoning of the wicked in 2:1b-20 and 5:4-13 gives a detailed description of earthly life. And although the way they view earthly life fits into the general conception of life on earth as a material and limited time (7:1), yet their reasoning is false because they are mistaken in two

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<sup>518</sup> See more about the role of wisdom at the discussion of the metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY.

<sup>519</sup> Collins, "The Mysteries of God," 304: the idea of mortality and immortality are related to "two aspects of the same human being" in Wis unlike in 4Q Instructions where it relates to "two kinds of people and two kinds of behavior." See more in Collins, "The Mysteries of God," 300-304; McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 110.

respects. Firstly, their conception of human life is wrong. They equate earthly or physical life and human life; in their perception human life is limited to life on earth and it is, therefore, transitory. They exclude even the idea to go beyond this limitedness (2:1b-5). But the wicked are mistaken because although human beings are indeed created, and, consequently, their nature is mortal, if they step into the realm of God that is eternal, they will live forever. The second mistake of the wicked arises from the first: since mortality and immortality are two coherent aspects of human beings, the way the wicked understand physical death is not correct as well. Those who view human life as a limited time do not only fail to see the other aspect of life, but also misunderstand what mortality means. Although they see earthly life correctly via LIFE IS A JOURNEY and DEATH IS THE END OF LIFE'S JOURNEY, and they even see that DEATH IS GOING TO A FINAL DESTINATION, they do not identify this final location correctly. In the reasoning of the wicked life ends with physical death (2:1-5); they do not recognize the perspective of immortality.

But let us now go step by step. Earthly life is bound to the idea of time: it is limited, short and finite. The metaphors we can see are LIFE IS A PRECIOUS POSSESSION, TIME IS MOTION, LIFE IS A JOURNEY and finally, LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE and DEATH IS DEPARTURE. The combination of these describes physical life as a limited period which passes away and ends in physical death. It has been noted that although the wicked are wrong in equating human life and earthly life, their conception of earthly life is basically in agreement with the general idea of earthly life. Therefore we can discuss the metaphors in the speech of the wicked together with the metaphors found in Solomon's prayer, only pointing out where the wicked leave out some aspects of earthly life or their view is biased.

I do not analyse all the texts in the speech of the wicked, since they all structure the concept of human life, and they do it by using the same metaphors; I will only consider a few texts to illustrate my point.

ὀλίγος ἐστὶν καὶ λυπηρὸς ὁ βίος ἡμῶν  
καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἴσας ἐν τελευτῇ ἀνθρώπου  
καὶ οὐκ ἐγνώσθη ὁ ἀναλύσας ἐξ ᾧδου  
ὅτι αὐτοσχεδίως ἐγενήθημεν

καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο ἐσόμεθα ὡς οὐχ ὑπάρξαντες  
 ὅτι καπνὸς ἡ πνοὴ ἐν ῥισὶν ἡμῶν  
 καὶ ὁ λόγος σπινθὴρ ἐν κινήσει καρδίας ἡμῶν  
 οὗ σβεσθέντος  
 τέφρα ἀποβήσεται τὸ σῶμα  
 καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα διαχυθήσεται ὡς χαῦνος ἀήρ  
 καὶ τὸ ὄνομα ἡμῶν ἐπιλησθήσεται ἐν χρόνῳ  
 καὶ οὐθεὶς μνημονεύσει τῶν ἔργων ἡμῶν  
 καὶ παρελεύσεται ὁ βίος ἡμῶν ὡς ἵχνη νεφέλης  
 καὶ ὡς ὁμίχλη διασκεδασθήσεται  
 διωχθεῖσα ὑπὸ ἀκτίνων ἡλίου  
 καὶ ὑπὸ θερμότητος αὐτοῦ βαρυνθεῖσα

σκιᾶς γὰρ πάροδος ὁ καιρὸς ἡμῶν  
 καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἀναποδισμὸς τῆς τελευτῆς ἡμῶν  
 ὅτι κατεσφραγίσθη καὶ οὐδεὶς ἀναστρέφει<sup>520</sup> (2:1b-5).

2:1b-5 exposes in a chiasmic structure what the grumbling of the wicked, mentioned in 1:3-11, is about. The first passage on the shortness of life is echoed in the last passage: life is like “the passing of a shadow.” Both passages underline the idea that “there is no return” from death. The middle section has two metaphorical constructions that parallel each other; the first uses the fire as a source domain, while the second uses the elements of nature. The central issue in the grumbling of the wicked is that they don’t accept that God created man with a purpose; they live in a world, which does not point beyond its end.<sup>521</sup>

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<sup>520</sup> Short and sorrowful is our life, and there is no remedy when a life comes to its end, and no one has been known to return from Hades. For we were born by mere chance, and hereafter we shall be as though we had never been, for the breath in our nostrils is smoke, and reason is a spark kindled by the beating of our hearts; when it is extinguished, the body will turn to ashes, and the spirit will dissolve like empty air. Our name will be forgotten in time, and no one will remember our works; our life will pass away like the traces of a cloud, and be scattered like mist that is chased by the rays of the sun and overcome by its heat. For our allotted time is the passing of a shadow, and there is no return from our death, because it is sealed up and no one turns back.

<sup>521</sup> Clarke, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 27; Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 163-168.



Ὀλίγος ἐστὶν. . . ὁ βίος ἡμῶν (2:1b) expresses that life is limited in terms of time; that human beings have a certain allotted time to live on earth.<sup>522</sup> Coming to life is not personalized; according to the wicked, “we were born by chance” (2:2a). What is sure is that we all die and “we shall be as though we had never been” (2:2b). All the personal characteristics of one’s life will disappear in death: τὸ ὄνομα ἡμῶν, τῶν ἔργων ἡμῶν and finally ὁ βίος ἡμῶν (2:4; cf. 5:8-12). Ὁ βίος ἡμῶν (2:1b) forms an inclusion with ὁ καιρὸς ἡμῶν (2:5a): *our life* is the life that is allotted to us; our life is “short and sorrowful” because this is only what is “allotted” to us. Ὁ βίος refers to personal life, with all the possessions and properties one has in life; it is not life in general, but the things one realizes in life and the way one lives his life.<sup>523</sup> LIFE IS CONCEIVED AS AN ENTITY; therefore it can be qualified (our life) and quantified (short).<sup>524</sup> Further, LIFE IS A PRECIOUS POSSESSION for the wicked; the properties of life (work, name) are also possessions.<sup>525</sup> All these will disappear with death. So, earthly life in the reasoning of the wicked is perceived as a precious possession that is lost with death. Since the wicked equate human life with earthly life, they regard physical life as their only possession; thus, its disappearance with physical death means a terrible and final loss. LIFE IS A PRECIOUS POSSESSION conceives changes in life (getting old, dying) as “the motion of an object [the possessions of life or life itself] to, or away from, the thing-changing,” as Lakoff describes it.<sup>526</sup> The other way of perceiving the passing of time is via STATES ARE LOCATIONS where “the motion of the thing-changing” itself describes the change.<sup>527</sup> In the next verse we can see this latter metaphor:

καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἀναποδισμὸς τῆς τελευτῆς ἡμῶν  
ὅτι κατεσφραγίσθη καὶ οὐδεὶς ἀναστρέφει<sup>528</sup> (2:5bc).

Via STATES ARE LOCATIONS and DEATH IS DEPARTURE we understand that the verse expresses the idea that death is going to a final destination (2:1, 5).<sup>529</sup> Moreover, their life is *sealed up* in death,

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<sup>522</sup> Cf. Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 34-35.

<sup>523</sup> See Taylor, “The Eschatological Meaning of Life and Death,” 101.

<sup>524</sup> See Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 25.

<sup>525</sup> For this conception of life, see Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 36.

<sup>526</sup> Lakoff, “The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor,” 225.

<sup>527</sup> Lakoff, “The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor,” 225.

<sup>528</sup> And there is no return from our death, because it is sealed up and no one turns back.

<sup>529</sup> See Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 7-8, 97-100. See also the discussion on LIFE IS A JOURNEY below.

and since nobody sees the things that are sealed up, via KNOWING IS SEEING we understand that the wicked are forgotten (2:4ab).<sup>530</sup>

Here we have to note that life is precious for the righteous, too, but what he means by life is different from the way the wicked understand life. For the wicked life is equal to earthly life and values, whereas for the righteous life defines an existence in communion with wisdom (7:7-9:17). Thus the righteous' comprehension of life extends beyond the earthly life to the presence in the realm of God through wisdom (2:13).<sup>531</sup> Even if they lose their earthly life, they do not lose their precious possession, life with wisdom, so they will live forever (3:1-9).

Further, we will see that the metaphor LIFE IS A PRECIOUS POSSESSION is combined with TIME IS MOTION. This combination underlines the idea that earthly life is bound to movement in time.<sup>532</sup> TIME IS MOTION has two different special cases: in the first case the observer is fixed, while time is moving; in the second case time is fixed and the observer is moving.<sup>533</sup> Lakoff argues that the "entailments" of the first are that "since motion is continuous and one-dimensional," so is time. The "entailments" of the second are that "time has extension, and can be measured. . . . may be conceived of as a bounded region."<sup>534</sup> We may be able to recognize one case of the second version of TIME IS MOTION in Wis 2:1 where life is pictured as an entity. We note that in the verses we analyse in this chapter the meaning of time and life correspond; they both refer to earthly life that is allotted to human beings. Given this, I think we can take ὀλίγος ἐστὶν . . . ὁ βίος ἡμῶν in 2:1b as an example of TIME IS MOTION, more exactly as the second case of it. Then time can be seen as a bounded region, a space that can be measured, and of which it can be said that it is short. This metaphor is then combined with LIFE IS A PRECIOUS POSSESSION in 2:1-5, thus, underlining both the shortness and the preciousness of life.

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<sup>530</sup> See KNOWING IS SEEING related to the perception of time in Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 48. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 141: the author frequently uses "seeing" in a "theological sense"; "true 'seeing' comes not from the power of bodily eyes, but requires a divine revelation or intervention, or at least good will on man's part to view the nature of things correctly." Cf. 13:1, 5.

<sup>531</sup> See the discussion on knowledge.

<sup>532</sup> Cf. Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 70-71.

<sup>533</sup> Lakoff, "The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor," 217.

<sup>534</sup> Lakoff, "The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor," 217.

In 2:4 we can see the other special case of TIME IS MOTION that is TIME PASSING IS THE MOTION OF AN OBJECT:<sup>535</sup>

καὶ     παρελεύσεται ὁ βίος ἡμῶν  
          ὥς ἵχνη νεφέλης  
          καὶ  
          ὥς ὁμίχλη  
      διασκεδασθήσεται  
          διωχθεῖσα  
          ὑπὸ ἀκτίνων ἡλίου  
                  καὶ  
          ὑπὸ θερμότητος αὐτοῦ  
      βαρυνθεῖσα<sup>536</sup> (2:4c-f).

Here human beings are fixed, while life moves (away) with time passing: like a cloud or a mist human life disappears without traces. I would suggest that we can also see instances of A LIFETIME IS A DAY. This metaphor is a specific case of “the more general composite metaphor of life as a waxing and waning cycle of heat and light.”<sup>537</sup> Thus, A LIFETIME IS A DAY includes both the metaphorical structuring LIFE IS LIGHT that views death as darkness and LIFE IS HEAT that views death as cold. When the day begins light and heat are gradually increasing, but after midday they are gradually decreasing.<sup>538</sup> If we understand the text via this metaphor, we will see the wicked pictured in their utmost strength and force since the texts speaks about the power of light and heat. Is this metaphor then coherent with the other metaphorical structuring which depicts the passing away of human life? If not, we cannot accept that the text can also be understood via A LIFE IS A DAY. I would suggest that it is consistent. But in order to show that we have to reflect again on οὕτως καὶ ἡμεῖς γεννηθέντες ἐξελίπομεν<sup>539</sup> (5:13a). The verse speaks

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<sup>535</sup> See Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 33-34, for the mappings: times are things; passing of time is motion; observer is fixed, time is moving; future is in front of the observer, while past is behind.

<sup>536</sup> Our life will pass away like the traces of a cloud, and be scattered like mist that is chased by the rays of the sun and overcome by its heat.

<sup>537</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 88.

<sup>538</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 87-88.

<sup>539</sup> So we also, as soon as we were born, ceased to be.

explicitly about the spiritual death of the wicked and their connection with evil as soon as they were born. I consider 2:4 to be a parallel idea. The passing away of the mist emphasizes the finiteness of life, while light and heat emphasize that the wicked still enjoy their youth and strength, but the combination of these two metaphors would say more: it might point to the fact that the strength and might of the wicked is illusory, their life is actually passing away like mist. Moreover, since light and heat are shown as destroying forces, and so they do not only talk about the strength of the wicked, but they also emphasize the destroying feature of their life, the text might also point to the fact that the finiteness imbedded in the thought and life of the wicked is their destroyer. Although this may seem a rather far-fetched interpretation, it is in line with the thought that the worldview and reasoning of the wicked is the root of their ultimate destruction.

To conclude this argumentation, the TIME IS MOTION metaphor grasps the flowing of time. The other metaphors increase this sense of the inevitability of time's passing.<sup>540</sup> This feature has an ultimate impact on the worldview and the fate of the wicked for they do not accept and do not know the other timeframe that is eternal; their lifetime is defined by the metaphor TIME IS MOTION. And this limitation will lead to their destruction. So their earthly life is viewed as a motion towards destruction. All over this chapter we can see examples of simultaneous mappings; life is perceived via different metaphors, many times in the same verse. This leads to the perception of different aspects of the same target concept via different metaphorical structuring because each source will preserve its "image-schema structure."<sup>541</sup> Thus when the text views life as motion, it emphasizes its flow. When we see life as precious possession, we can understand that life is considered the biggest treasure. When life is described by the domains of light and heat, we can also grasp the stages of life. The common feature is that all these metaphors picture earthly life limited and transitory after which departure to death is inevitable (2:1c).

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<sup>540</sup> The idea included in Wis 2:1-5 reminds strongly of Qoheleth. See especially Qoh 2:16, 22-23; 3:19-22; 8:8, 13; 9:5-6. Cf. 1 Enoch 102:6-11.

<sup>541</sup> Lakoff, "The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor," 215.

In σκιᾷ γὰρ πάροδος ὁ καιρὸς ἡμῶν<sup>542</sup> (2:5a) again we see the metaphor TIME PASSING IS THE MOTION OF AN OBJECT. Chap. 5 contains more verses that illustrate goods and values gathered in earthly life as objects that are vanishing in space in the course of time. These metaphors are imbedded in the second lamentation of the wicked, but contrary to the first one where they are preparing to make use of life at its full, chap. 5 depicts what happens after their physical death. They have already ended their lives and look back to it. They can now see that what they thought to be the only rational solution for the shortness of life (making use of the creation) has no sense at all. Their second speech, therefore, is much bitter since it contains not only the surety of death but the realization that immortality exists, but they missed the possibility to share it.

ὥς ναῦς διερχομένη κυμαινόμενον ὕδωρ  
 ἧς διαβάσης οὐκ ἔστιν ἵχνος εὐρεῖν  
 οὐδὲ ἀτραπὸν τρόπιος αὐτῆς ἐν κύμασιν<sup>543</sup> (5:10).

The next verses also show values in life conceived in terms of a bird that flies through the air leaving no sign behind or of an arrow that disappears in the air.<sup>544</sup>

Source: ship, bird, arrow	Target: life/values of life
Movement of ship, bird, arrow	Flow of life
No sign or trace	The total disappearance of life/values of life

The metaphors of the ship, bird and arrow, thus, express the ephemeral character of all things in life. The ship, bird and arrow pass through the air or water; they are not static.<sup>545</sup> But what is even more painful, they leave no trace. This echoes verse 4:19 that speaks of the total

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<sup>542</sup> For our allotted time is the passing of a shadow.

<sup>543</sup> Like a ship that sails through the billowy water, and when it has passed no trace can be found, no track of its keel in the waves.

<sup>544</sup> The similes are also seen as metaphors by Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 133, since similes also understand one thing in terms of another.

<sup>545</sup> The background idea is Job 9:22-28 (Larcher, *Études*, 371) or Prov 30:19 (Goodrick, *Wisdom*, 158; see also Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 147).

annihilation of the wicked. Time is structured here in terms of space and motion; earthly time and everything related to it is vanishing: παρήλθεν ἐκεῖνα πάντα ὡς σκιά<sup>546</sup> (5:9).

LIFE IS further conceived as A JOURNEY<sup>547</sup> as it appears from 5:7. The context is the same, the second speech of the wicked when facing the judgment:

ἀνομίας ἐνεπλήσθημεν τρίβοις καὶ ἀπωλείας  
καὶ διωδεύσαμεν ἐρήμους ἀβάτους  
τὴν δὲ ὁδὸν κυρίου οὐκ ἐπέγνωμεν<sup>548</sup>

The LIFE IS A JOURNEY metaphor also conceptualizes life in terms of motion and space. LIFE IS A JOURNEY is based on the “event structure metaphor,” and it makes use of all its structure: the courses of life and means are conceived as paths and ways, and people are pictured as travellers moving along these paths, purposes are destinations, states are locations, and changes of state are changes of locations.<sup>549</sup> The wicked say that the paths they took were not τὴν ὁδὸν κυρίου (the paths of God). Thus we can see the two types of path here: the one the wicked took, the path of evil, and the way of God.<sup>550</sup> Ἡ ὁδὸς κυρίου is ὁδὸς ἀληθείας and δικαιοσύνης (5:6). Ὁδὸς ἀληθείας ὁδὸς κυρίου is what was considered strange by the wicked in 2:15b. The wicked’s recognition that they had not known God’s ways (5:7) is contrasted with the righteous’ walking on the path of righteousness (2:13-16).<sup>551</sup> 11:1-2ff also pictures the righteous travelling on the path of God; these verses, indeed, refer to a journey (Exodus), but they also serve as the metaphor of the righteous’ life with God. 9:13-18 emphasizes the role of wisdom in knowing what is pleasing for God. Thus we understand that it is only through wisdom that one finds the

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<sup>546</sup> All those things have vanished like a shadow.

<sup>547</sup> Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 38: the journey schema is actually the “specific-level metaphor” of the more generic motion schema.

<sup>548</sup> We took our fill of the paths of lawlessness and destruction, and we journeyed through trackless deserts, but the way of the Lord we have not known.

<sup>549</sup> See Lakoff, “The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor,” 222-223; Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 63-64.

<sup>550</sup> See Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life*, 162-164. Schnabel, *Law and Wisdom*, 82 n. 410: “The concept of life (or generally of human existence) as ‘walking a (good or bad) path/walk’ is an OT motif which is very prominent in the intertestamental literature.” For the two way theology in Jewish literature, see Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life*, 173-174; Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 9-10.

<sup>551</sup> McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 78.

way of the Lord; wisdom is the guide in this journey (9:11, 17-18; 14:6; 18:3).<sup>552</sup> This is another element of the domain journey that is mapped into the target domain life: the traveller is guided by somebody or something. From all these it follows that people have two choices: either follow the way of God or follow the way of wickedness. The choices in life correspond to the routes of a journey in the LIFE IS A JOURNEY metaphor. These routes lead to different destinations. If one walks on the path of God, he will be with God and share immortality (2:13-16; 5:5, 15); on the contrary, the path of evil leads to death (4:19; 5:13, 17-23). With the help of the metaphor STATES ARE LOCATIONS, we can perceive how the righteous reaches the state of eternal communion with God by walking on the path of life with wisdom. The metaphor also gives us insight into the change of state that is implied by receiving wisdom. The righteous is now in the hand of God (3:1); the location of earthly realm has been changed into the divine sphere that conveys immortality for the righteous. The wicked's earthly location on the contrary will be followed by the realm of death that implies the state of eternal separation from God, and because of that, perishing.

If LIFE IS A JOURNEY, DEATH IS THE END OF LIFE'S JOURNEY (Wis 3:1-6). The paths and ways of the journey end. This means that the feature of earthly life that is conceived in terms of motion through a space implies the concept of physical death. But DEATH IS also DEPARTURE FOR A FINAL DESTINATION. And this final destination, eternal life is something that contrasts the category of motion. Another metaphor that structures earthly life is LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE that was mentioned above. BIRTH is seen as ARRIVAL to this life (7:6), while DEATH is viewed as DEPARTURE (7:6).<sup>553</sup> The state one enters after physical death is perceived as a final location towards which one departs at the moment of death. This final state can be either immortality or eternal death (3:1-9; 4:10, 11, 14; 5:5, 15; 4:18b-5:23). The choices in life influence the final location one enters. The righteous that follows God's path, or in other words, the one who lives with wisdom, reaches the final state of being in the realm of God where he shares immortality. This final destination is elaborated by the metaphors being at peace, in the hand of God, under

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<sup>552</sup> God is also called guide in 18:3; and he is the guide of wisdom, too (7:15).

<sup>553</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 1.

God's eternal reign, among the saints.<sup>554</sup> On the contrary the wicked who did not find God's way will reach the state of eternal death. This metaphor is especially clear in 4:10, 11, and 14ab:

εὐάρεστος θεῷ γενόμενος ἠγαπήθη  
καὶ ζῶν μεταξὺ ἀμαρτωλῶν μετετέθη  
ἠρπάγη  
μὴ κακία ἀλλάξει σύνεσιν αὐτοῦ  
ἢ δόλος ἀπατήσῃ ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ  
...  
ἀρεστὴ γὰρ ἦν κυρίῳ ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ  
διὰ τοῦτο ἔσπευσεν ἐκ μέσου πονηρίας<sup>555</sup>

Ἡρπάγη, μετετέθη, and even ἔσπευσεν ἐκ μέσου πονηρίας view physical death as a movement. But even more explicit description is in 3:2-3a where the chiasm included in vv. 2b-3a explains death (2a) in terms of departure:

καὶ ἐλογίσθη  
κάκωσις  
ἡ ἔξοδος αὐτῶν  
καὶ  
ἡ ἀφ' ἡμῶν πορεία  
σύντριμμα<sup>556</sup>

This is also the point where the wicked are wrong; they mistake physical death for the final destination, and they view physical death as both the end of life's journey and also the final destination from where "no one returns" (2:5). But the speech of the wicked is enclosed by the

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<sup>554</sup> These are elaborations of the metaphor of final destination; cf. Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 68. Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 67-72: the ordinary metaphors can be extended (adding elements), elaborated, questioned and composed (more metaphors together) in order to go beyond the ordinary system.

<sup>555</sup> There were some who pleased God and were loved by him, and while living among sinners were taken up. They were caught up so that evil might not change their understanding or guile deceive their souls . . . for their souls were pleasing to the Lord, therefore he took them quickly from the midst of wickedness.

<sup>556</sup> And their departure was thought to be a disaster, and their going from us to be their destruction.



narrator's voice pointing out that the wicked are wrong (2:1a, 21-23; 5:1-3, 14-16).<sup>557</sup> The author uses the reasoning of the wicked for "a polemic against a wrong idea of death,"<sup>558</sup> which is generated by a wrong idea of life.<sup>559</sup> The author wants to emphasize that human life is not finite if it is lived with wisdom; what the wicked cannot see is that human life can continue through physical death. And ironically, what the wicked imagine becomes true for them because their physical death turns out to be their punishment and as such the final destination of eternal death from where "no one returns." 4:18b-19 point back to the wicked's negative reasoning in 2:1b-5 showing that physical death projected by the wicked turns out to be eternal death for them. While still living on earth, the righteous and the wicked already belong to the realm of God and that of Hades, respectively;<sup>560</sup> the final destination depends on whether the person belongs to God's realm or Hades spiritually on earth and at the moment of death departs fully towards this destination (cf. 2:13 and 5:5; 5:6-13 and 1:16; 2:24; 4:18b-19).<sup>561</sup> Thus, spiritual life and death will lead to eternal life and ultimate death.<sup>562</sup>

In 4:10, 11, 14 we can also see another property of DEATH IS GOING TO A FINAL DESTINATION. "There may be a direction to the departure, such as an ascent or a descent."<sup>563</sup> Here the righteous ascends to the realm of God. Although the text does not say it explicitly, we can deduce from the

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<sup>557</sup> James D. Tabor, "What the Bible Says about Death, Afterlife, and the Future," in *What the Bible Really Says: About: Capital Punishment, the Future, Government, Marriage and Divorce, Miracles, Segregation and Intolerance, Slavery, War, Wealth, Wisdom, Women, the World*, ed. Morton Smith and Joseph R. Hoffmann (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1989), 45: Wis 2:1-4 "is precisely the view of Ecclesiastes, as we have seen. But here the author of The Wisdom of Solomon attributes this view to the grossly wicked (Wis. of Sol. 2:21-24)! He strongly supports a view that is the very opposite of Ecclesiastes, that of the immortality of the soul and resurrection of the dead."

<sup>558</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 135. See also Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 163-165.

<sup>559</sup> See Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 70-71. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 135-136: the link between 16:12-14 and 2:1 shows that the author "uses the divine intervention in the desert to refute the charge that no one 'releases from Hades.'"

<sup>560</sup> See below at the discussion on the dynamics of the three realms.

<sup>561</sup> Cf. Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 7.

<sup>562</sup> Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 10, notes that in 1:16-5:23 the "sections devoted to the righteous are all of an eschatological character, but those which deal with the ungodly present a distinct time-sequence." McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 87: "there are several factors in the drama which would indicate time passing in which repentance would have been possible. The presence of the heavenly reversals between the speeches of the wicked, with the gifts of immortality for the just (3.1-9) and 'fruit' and share in worship for the barren woman (3.13) and the eunuch (3.14) respectively, do not simply act as signs of the imminent judgment but . . . imply the passage of time."

<sup>563</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 11.

metaphor HADES IS DOWN that the wicked will descend to Hades<sup>564</sup> (1:16; 2:24). This metaphor increases the impression that the wicked move away from God forever since Hades is separated from God's realm. Accordingly, the wicked who descend to Hades will not share immortality. Immortality is, thus, again formulated in terms of presence in the realm of God.

We have described earthly life in terms of motion and journey. In contrast, eternity is not bound to time; therefore it is not expressed in terms of motion. It does not have a beginning or end; it is set against cosmic time (God and wisdom exist before creation; cf. 9:1-2; 10:1) that is the categories of past, present and future do not apply to it. As it was argued above, eternity is God's life that is timeless eternity. The immortality of man is conceived as a state of blessed communion with God (being in love, peace, rest, being a king, judge, and, more importantly, incorruption), rather than perceived in terms of duration. A person's state can, however, change. Thus, in this sense we can talk about duration: the righteous gets from one state (physical life) to another (immortality); the wicked also gets from physical life to the state of death. However, immortality is a state that is permanent; it implies an eternal communion between the righteous and God, and because of this, eternal life (5:15).<sup>565</sup>

We have to mention another metaphor at the end.

ὅτι καπνὸς ἢ πνοὴ ἐν ῥισὶν ἡμῶν  
καὶ ὁ λόγος σπινθήρ ἐν κινήσει καρδίας ἡμῶν  
οὗ σβεσθέντος  
τέφρα  
ἀποβήσεται  
τὸ σῶμα  
καὶ  
τὸ πνεῦμα  
διαχυθήσεται

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<sup>564</sup> Note that even if departure is not mentioned in some of these verses, the metaphor DEATH IS DEPARTURE FOR A FINAL LOCATION is implied and makes us understand the text. Cf. Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 14.

<sup>565</sup> See more about the quantitative feature in the second part of the discussion on wisdom.

ὥς χαῦνος ἀήρ<sup>566</sup> (2:2c-3).

Besides the literary chiasmus, 2:2c-3 has a chiastic structure thematically as well: breath is like smoke/the spirit will be dissolved like empty air (both smoke and air are subtle); reason is a spark/the body will turn to ashes (spark starts a phenomenon whose end product is ashes). LIFE IS conceived as FIRE in 2:2c-3. Smoke, sparks, cold ashes correspond to the last stage of fire that is extinction. Via the metaphor LIFE IS A FIRE we understand that the text refers to the last stage of life that is physical death.<sup>567</sup> The idea of wood changing into ashes is mapped onto the person that ceases to exist with death. The metaphor LIFE IS A FIRE, thus, points to the transience of human life, and mortality.<sup>568</sup> With another chiasm included in 2:3, human being is viewed as body and soul; both parts of human being are dissolved in death. But since 2:3 is a wrong view on life and death, the opposite of it seems to be true, i.e. human being who is body and soul does not disappear. This may be an argument for an implicit idea of resurrection in Wis.

When in 3:7 the author argues against this wrong idea of life and death, interestingly, he uses the same source domain to point out the opposite of 2:2c-3. The context is different here: καὶ ἐν καιρῷ ἐπισκοπῆς αὐτῶν ἀναλάμπουσιν καὶ ὥς σπινθήρες ἐν καλάμῃ διαδραμοῦνται.<sup>569</sup> We have sparks again,<sup>570</sup> but combined with flame; the righteous are “flaming up.” The metaphor expresses that the righteous does not die (contrary to what have been said in 2:2c-3), but lives forever. LIFE IS A FIRE is also a specific case of the composite metaphor “life as a waxing and waning cycle of heat and light.”<sup>571</sup> Thus, it includes LIFE IS LIGHT and LIFE IS HEAT as well.<sup>572</sup> Because of these we can understand the difference between 2:2c-3 and 3:7. LIFE IS LIGHT views death as darkness and life as light,<sup>573</sup> thus in 3:7 the righteous’ shining means that they are alive.

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<sup>566</sup> For the breath in our nostrils is smoke, and reason is a spark kindled by the beating of our hearts; when it is extinguished, the body will turn to ashes, and the spirit will be dissolved like empty air.

<sup>567</sup> See Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 31.

<sup>568</sup> The other metaphors in 2:2-5 that use the elements of nature as source (shadow, empty air, cloud, mist) also emphasize the transience of human life.

<sup>569</sup> In the time of their visitation they will shine forth, and will run like sparks through the stubble.

<sup>570</sup> Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 86-87, noted that the same term (σπινθήρ) is used to describe first the transitoriness of life, then the “vivacity” of the righteous.

<sup>571</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 88.

<sup>572</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 88.

<sup>573</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 87.

LIFE IS HEAT views death as cold and life as warmth;<sup>574</sup> thus cold ashes refer to physical death. Thus the image of fire is used in two different ways to conceptualize different aspects of human life: the wicked talk about the transience of human life (2:1-5), while 3:7 points to another aspect of life that is immortality (3:7). By this the author corrects the worldview of the wicked: life that they thought to be dead sparks and ashes (2:2-3) is a living flame for the righteous (3:7). This implies that the righteous' life does not end with physical death, but they will live forever (3:8-9; 5:15). The metaphor also has ethical connotation; the image of the righteous' running like sparks is linked to the image of ruling and judging (3:8). The righteous can now act like God because he has the quality of his life.

### *The Value System of the Righteous and the Wicked*

In this small section we shall describe the value system of the righteous and the wicked. The importance of the symbolic universe<sup>575</sup> lies in organizing one's thought and value system. It creates a system of values and priorities, a scale of values. The values are understood in relation to the highest value, or to put it in other words, the highest value defines the meaning of the other values. We will see that although the righteous and the wicked have similar values, a lot depends on their ranking; their worldview depends on what is considered as the highest value.

We have seen that the wicked only believe in the shortness of life and mortality. Therefore the main value for them is MORE IS BETTER: many children are better (cf. 3:12, 16; 4:3-6), wealth and earthly pleasures are better (2:6-9; 5:8), and long life is better (2:1-5). This in turn is coherent with HAVING CONTROL or POWER IS BETTER (2:10-11). The value VIRTUE IS BETTER is subordinated to POWER IS BETTER; the wicked replace God's righteousness that is taking care of the old, widow, poor with another type of righteousness: might (2:11, also 2:10, 12-20). However, their power over people was actually given to them by God (6:1-3), and they prove to be weak (5:1-2f) because real power is only in life with wisdom (3:8; 5:1, 15-16; 8:9-16). Without wisdom no one can have true virtue and power; the virtue and power of the wicked

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<sup>574</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 87.

<sup>575</sup> The term is coined by Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1966; repr., 1991); we use it here in the sense explained above, as a mental world, a person's system of values, organized and hierarchiated that influence one's conduct and behaviour. See also van der Watt, 'Thou Shalt.'

proves to be false. The value system of the wicked determines their choices, behaviour, actions, and finally, their future. The wicked make wrong choices and do wrong deeds because their thoughts and values are wrong; therefore, they will not share immortality.

On the contrary, the righteous will be with God because their value system is organized by WISDOM IS BETTER (7:10; 4:1).<sup>576</sup> All the other values are subordinated to this, and get their meaning in relation to wisdom. Life with wisdom becomes κρείσσων instead of long life and many children. This value has the highest priority, since wisdom enables the communion of God. The pictures of the barren woman, the eunuch and the righteous who dies young (3:13-14; 4:1, 7-14, 16f) presents us a value system where the highest value is an undefiled life full of wisdom. This contrasts the value system of the wicked that praises life without sorrow, many children and a long life (2:1-5; 3:12, 16-19; 4:3-6).<sup>577</sup> We can see the reverse of the values here. Moral integrity that is life with wisdom is the important thing in the value system determined by God.<sup>578</sup> This value system still coheres with MORE IS BETTER, but Wis redefines what *more* is. Because of the priority of the metaphor WISDOM IS BETTER, *more* will be applied to wisdom: πολὺὰ δὲ ἐστὶν φρόνησις ἀνθρώποις καὶ ἡλικία γήρως βίος ἀκηλίδωτος<sup>579</sup> (4:9).<sup>580</sup> Thus, what happens is that all the values turn out to be something else in God's realm. We can see their real

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<sup>576</sup> An observation made by McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 84: "In the examination (δοκιμάσωμεν 2.19) by the wicked, the just man is found to be . . . in 2.11, worthless (ἄχρηστον). In the examination (ἐδοκίμασεν) by God, he . . . is discovered to be gold (ὡς χρυσὸν 3.6)." Cf. Isa 40:19; Zech 13:9; Mal 3:3; Ps 66:10; Prov 17:3; 27:21.

<sup>577</sup> Long life and children were also considered God's blessing by the Jews. See Clarke, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 28; Wright, "Wisdom," 560; Taylor, "The Eschatological Meaning of Life and Death," 74-75. Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 131: "A person's status and stature in the Middle East were deeply affected by the number of his progeny. Sexual sin . . . was believed to result in sterility." For the tradition that cursed the sterile woman and the eunuch, see Gen 30:23; Judg 13:2; Job 15:34; Isa 4:1; Deut 23:1; 2 Kgs 20:18. Cheon, "Three Characters," 108-109, however, notes that a virtuous woman was considered wise in ancient Israel (Prov 20:7), and similarly, the eunuch "whose hands have done no lawless deed, and who has not devised wicked things against the Lord" (3:14) is implicitly equalled to the wise in Wis. Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 95: "A ripe old age was considered the Lord's special blessing for faithfulness (Gen 15:15; 25:8; 35:29; Exod 20:12; Deut 4:40; Judg 8:32). Even in sapiential circles, old age was considered a sign of wisdom." On this topic, see also Cheon, "Three Characters," 110.

<sup>578</sup> See Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 132.

<sup>579</sup> But understanding is gray hair for anyone, and a blameless life is ripe old age. See also 4:13.

<sup>580</sup> Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 96: "The contrast of the youth who shows exceptional wisdom with elders who act foolishly or wickedly has biblical precedents. . . . But only with our author is the possibility of youthful moral maturity highlighted in the context of a youth's early death." For the wise youth, see examples in Job 32:6-9; Qoh 4:13.

meaning now for as we have said, all the values are measured against God. MORE IS BETTER refers to the gifts received through wisdom (chaps. 8-9) and not earthly goods such as wealth, long life, many children, and power. POWER IS BETTER is also subordinated to VIRTUE IS BETTER, and therefore it is defined in a different way. POWER IS BETTER refers to the power given by wisdom (3:8; 5:1, 15-16; 7:8-10; 8:9-16), to the state of the righteous as the child of God (2:13) who will become king in God's kingdom (3:8; 5:16).

Thus the metaphors POWER IS BETTER and MORE IS BETTER have different definitions in the view of the wicked and that of the righteous. This is because the world of the righteous is governed by VIRTUE IS BETTER and that of the wicked is centred on MORE IS BETTER. In both of the value systems we can find the same values, but depending on their ranking, their definition changes.<sup>581</sup> There are several other values that were not mentioned here, love, light, knowledge, but they will be discussed later. These are also related to wisdom in the case of the righteous; they are regarded as her gifts (7:10, 17-21, 22, 29-30). The concepts of life, light, knowledge has different connotation in relation to the wicked; none of the concepts has the meaning it has in relation to wisdom. Knowledge becomes ignorance (13:1-5). Life is limited to earthly life alone (2:1-5). And love becomes deadly attraction (1:16, cf. 5:13). We did not discuss all these values here; our point was to show how the highest value can define all other values in one's worldview. The wicked, although having many of the values the righteous have, do not have wisdom as their highest value. This makes a huge difference and it changes their whole worldview. It subsequently influences their perspective on immortality: without wisdom, no value implies immortality.

The value system of the righteous also shares the value ALIVE IS UP; therefore their values lead to immortality (1:15; 2:22bc; 3:13-15; 4:7-9), whereas that of the wicked lead to eternal death (2:24; 3:16-19; 4:3-6, 18b-20).

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<sup>581</sup> See Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 22-24.

### *Immortality in Terms of Orientation Up*

Man in relation with God becomes more than a simple mortal being: he is immortal. Those who enter into relationship with wisdom also enter into relationship with God. In this communion with God man receives eternal life (3:1-9; 5:15), and having received eternal life, he becomes immortal.

We have described that God and his realm are linked to the domain up. Therefore, every other thing related to God is also linked to the domain up. Likewise eternity is linked to the domain up; in 9:9-10 Salomon prays to God to send wisdom, which was present at the creation (therefore pre-existent), ἐξ ἀγίων οὐρανῶν. Immortality is also structured in terms of the orientational metaphor ALIVE IS UP.<sup>582</sup> We can see a combination of the metaphors in Wis 5:15-16,<sup>583</sup> where the metaphor ALIVE IS UP, POWER IS UP and GOD IS UP are linked together:

δίκαιοι δὲ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα ζῶσιν

καὶ ἐν κυρίῳ

ὁ μισθὸς αὐτῶν

καὶ

ἡ φροντίς αὐτῶν

παρὰ ὑψίστῳ

διὰ τοῦτο λήμψονται τὸ βασίλειον τῆς εὐπρεπείας

καὶ τὸ διάδημα τοῦ κάλλους ἐκ χειρὸς κυρίου

ὅτι τῇ δεξιᾷ σκεπάσει αὐτοὺς

καὶ τῷ βραχίονι ὑπερασπιεῖ αὐτῶν<sup>584</sup>

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<sup>582</sup> Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 15, 18: the possible experiential basis of this metaphor is that those who are dead are lying, and the opposite is true to those who are alive—coherent with HEALTHY IS UP, HAPPY IS UP, etc. However, here *alive* appears in the context of salvation, which in terms of spatial orientation is “really up” (Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 24).

<sup>583</sup> Cf. Isa 62:3, 11.

<sup>584</sup> But the righteous live forever, and their reward is with the Lord; the Most High takes care of them. Therefore they will receive a glorious crown and a beautiful diadem from the hand of the Lord, because with his right hand he will cover them, and with his arm he will shield them.

The righteous is said to live forever; his reward is “with the Lord.”<sup>585</sup> Now we know that this reward refers to immortality, the text has just said it; if this is not enough, we can take a look at 2:22-23 again. The chiasm in 15bc (ἐν κυρίῳ ὁ μισθὸς αὐτῶν καὶ ἡ φροντίς αὐτῶν παρὰ ὑψίστῳ) is an extension of 15a and explains immortality in terms of being with the Lord, and refers to the Lord as the Most High. We can see how nicely and clearly the text itself makes these connections between the domain up, God and immortality. Further, regality is actually a metaphor for immortality. The righteous receives a glorious crown here, so he is made king (see 3:8). Thus, the righteous’ departure from death is also his glorification.

The route of the righteous after physical death is described in 4:10, 11, 14: καὶ ζῶν μεταξὺ ἀμαρτωλῶν μετετέθη<sup>586</sup> (4:10), ἡρπάγη<sup>587</sup> (4:11a), διὰ τοῦτο ἔσπευσεν ἐκ μέσου πονηρίας<sup>588</sup> (4:14b). Here we can also recognize the metaphor we have spoken above, DEATH IS GOING TO A FINAL DESTINATION, in upward direction, to the realm of God. But we shall also look at the context of the righteous’ death in 4:10, 11, 14, so that we find other nuances of our theme.

From chap. 3 we find out that the righteous’ death was not only a test of the unrighteous, but also a test of God:

ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ἐπείρασεν αὐτοὺς  
καὶ εὗρεν αὐτοὺς ἀξίους ἑαυτοῦ  
ὥς χρυσὸν ἐν χωνευτηρίῳ ἐδοκίμασεν αὐτοὺς  
καὶ ὥς ὀλοκάρπωμα θυσίας προσεδέξατο αὐτούς<sup>589</sup> (3:5c-6).

The two parallels emphasize not only that the righteous’ death was a test of God, but they also underline that the righteous was accepted by God. Since the righteous accepts his mortality in faith, he becomes open to God and receives immortality.<sup>590</sup> This is in fact the test of God: the

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<sup>585</sup> See more detailed analyses of these verses below where we deal with the metaphors *hand of God* and *LIFE IS PRESENCE WITH GOD*.

<sup>586</sup> And while living among sinners were taken up.

<sup>587</sup> They were caught up.

<sup>588</sup> Therefore he took them quickly from the midst of wickedness.

<sup>589</sup> Because God tested them and found them worthy of himself; like gold in the furnace he tried them, and like a sacrificial burnt offering he accepted them.

<sup>590</sup> See Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 163-168.



attitude of man towards mortality and life. Because God tested him and found him worthy, the righteous is in the hand of God that is he has been taken up to exist in the realm of God.

The terms in 3:1-9 are, in fact, the “reverse” terms of 2:17-20,<sup>591</sup> which receive new meaning here: the author wants to emphasize that behind the righteous’ death is in fact God’s intervention.<sup>592</sup>

δικαίων δὲ ψυχὰι ἐν χειρὶ θεοῦ  
καὶ οὐ μὴ ἄσχηται αὐτῶν βάσανος<sup>593</sup> (3:1).

εἰ γὰρ ἐστὶν ὁ δίκαιος υἱὸς θεοῦ  
ἀντιλήμψεται αὐτοῦ  
καὶ ῥύσεται αὐτὸν ἐκ χειρὸς ἀνθεστηκότων  
ὑβρεὶ καὶ βασάνῳ ἐτάσωμεν αὐτόν  
ἵνα γνῶμεν τὴν ἐπιείκειαν αὐτοῦ  
καὶ δοκιμάσωμεν τὴν ἀνεξικακίαν αὐτοῦ<sup>594</sup> (2:18-19).

ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ἐπείρασεν αὐτοὺς  
καὶ εὗρεν αὐτοὺς ἀξίους ἑαυτοῦ  
ὥς χρυσὸν ἐν χωνευτηρίῳ ἐδοκίμασεν αὐτοὺς  
καὶ ὥς ὀλοκάρπωμα θυσίας προσεδέξατο αὐτούς<sup>595</sup> (3:5c-6).

ἴδωμεν εἰ οἱ λόγοι αὐτοῦ ἀληθεῖς  
καὶ πειράσωμεν τὰ ἐν ἐκβάσει αὐτοῦ<sup>596</sup> (2:17).

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<sup>591</sup> Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 85.

<sup>592</sup> This is why the term ἐκβάσις (departure) in 2:17 becomes the manifestation of God’s saving power. See Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 127, for ἐκβάσις as God’s saving act. See also 11:14 where it appears in the context of Israel’s departure from Egypt.

<sup>593</sup> But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them.

<sup>594</sup> For if the righteous man is God’s child, he will help him, and will deliver him from the hand of his adversaries. Let us test him with insult and torture, so that we may find out how gentle he is, and make trial of his forbearance.

<sup>595</sup> Because God tested them and found them worthy of himself; like gold in the furnace he tried them, and like a sacrificial burnt offering he accepted them.

<sup>596</sup> Let us see if his words are true, and let us test what will happen at the end of his life.

καὶ ἐν καιρῷ ἐπισκοπῆς αὐτῶν ἀναλάμπουσιν<sup>597</sup> (3:7a).

θανάτῳ ἀσχήμονι καταδικάσωμεν αὐτόν  
ἔσται γὰρ αὐτοῦ ἐπισκοπὴ ἐκ λόγων αὐτοῦ<sup>598</sup> (2:20).

οἱ πεποιθότες ἐπ’ αὐτῷ συνήσουσιν ἀλήθειαν<sup>599</sup> (3:9a).

ἴδωμεν εἰ οἱ λόγοι αὐτοῦ ἀληθεῖς<sup>600</sup> (2:17a).

From the hand of the adversaries, ἐκ χειρὸς ἀνθεστηκότων the righteous will be in ἐν χειρὶ θεοῦ (2:18; 3:1).<sup>601</sup> The wicked want to insult the righteous with βάσανος, but he will not suffer any torment (2:19; 3:1). The test of the wicked was in fact the test of God; ἐπείρασεν . . . ἐδοκίμασεν αὐτοὺς (2:17; 3:5-6).<sup>602</sup> The ἐπισκοπή that the wicked do not believe in happens and it means protection for the righteous (2:20; 3:7).<sup>603</sup> The ἀλήθειαν of the righteous is the truth of God that will be understood by the righteous alone (2:17; 3:9).

But now the question arises whether the righteous that is elevated in 4:10, 11, 14 and the persecuted righteous mentioned in 2:12-3:8 is the same person or chap. 4 speaks about a righteous who, although died a premature death, did not die at the hand of the wicked.<sup>604</sup> Even

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<sup>597</sup> And in the time of their visitation they will shine forth.

<sup>598</sup> Let us condemn him to a shameful death, for, according to what he says, he will be protected.

<sup>599</sup> Those who trust in him will understand truth.

<sup>600</sup> Let us see if his words are true.

<sup>601</sup> See the discussion on the hand of God metaphor.

<sup>602</sup> See Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 84-86; Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 127; Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 126-127. See also the experiences of the just during the Exodus in Wis 11:8-9. For the desert experience as testing, see Exod 15:25; 16:4; 20:20; Deut 8:16, and as a time for learning discipline, see Deut 4:36; 8:2-5; 32:10; 2 Macc 6:12. For the test of God (3:5) we can find Greco-Roman philosophical parallels, similarly to the test of the wicked in 2:19; see Seeley, “Narrative, the Righteous Man and the Philosopher,” 73-75.

<sup>603</sup> Note that ἐπισκοπή means both divine judgment and protection/benefit; in Wis it occurs in both sense (cf. 3:7, 13; 2:20 with 14:11); see “ἐπισκοπή,” ANLEX, ad loc.; “ἐπισκοπή,” L&N, ad loc.; “ἐπισκοπή,” BDAG, ad loc. Cory, “Wisdom’s Rescue,” 112: ἐπισκοπή in Wis 2:20 “relates only to the righteous, and specifically to their promised rescue and vindication (cf. Wis 2:16, 18; 3:9; 4:15).”

<sup>604</sup> Many of the scholars differentiate between them. See Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 98. Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 94-97, distinguished 4:7-20 as the fourth “diptych” that contrasts the early death of the righteous with the long life of the wicked and also presents the righteous youth’s judgment over the wicked. Thus the judgment scene in 4:16-20 is linked to the righteous youth’s judgment, whereas the judgment scene in chap. 5 is linked to the persecuted righteous. The problem with this argumentation is that the judgment scene at the end of chap. 4, especially 4:20, seems to be the introduction of the judgment in chap. 5 where the persecuted righteous is judging. Even Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 101, says that the temporal change in 5:1

the question may arise whether the righteous in chap. 3 is the person referred to in the speech of the wicked in chap. 2 because the author changes from singular to plural form in chap. 3 when denoting the righteous, and because the righteous' opponents are called ἀφρόνων and ἀνθρώπων and not ἀσεβεῖς as in 1:16.<sup>605</sup> But as Kolarcik notes, “a number of verbal references imply that in this diptych the author is refuting the wicked's interpretation of their projected violent death of the just one . . . The switch from the singular [chap. 2] to the plural noun [3:1-9] for the just simply refers to the author's defence of the violent death of all the just.”<sup>606</sup> Returning to the question of the identity of the righteous in chap. 4 and that of the persecuted righteous in 2:12-3:8, we find many parallels in the two texts. Both 3:3b and 4:7 mentions that the righteous is at peace or rest:

οἱ δὲ εἰσιν ἐν εἰρήνῃ<sup>607</sup>

δίκαιος δὲ ἐὰν φθάσῃ τελευτῆσαι ἐν ἀναπαύσει ἔσται<sup>608</sup>

The remark of the author in both cases is an answer to the death of the righteous.<sup>609</sup> The texts emphasize that the wicked misunderstood the righteous' death:

ἔδοξαν ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς ἀφρόνων τεθνάναι

καὶ ἐλογίσθη

κάκωσις

ἢ ἔξοδος αὐτῶν

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“refers to the coming judgment that was described in the preceding verses of the last diptych (4:20).” This would still make sense if 4:20 introduced the judgment of both the persecuted righteous and the righteous who died young; however, in chap. 5 only the persecuted righteous is mentioned as judge. Cheon, “Three Characters,” 110, who also differentiates between them, says that similarly to the persecuted righteous, the youth who died early “did not die in peace.” He notes that “the Greek word καμῶν in 4.16a implies that he died with suffering, though it is not certain whether his suffering death was caused by disease or persecution.” Cheon is more inclined to see persecution as the cause of the youth's death. Cf. Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 87.

<sup>605</sup> For this see André Barucq, “La gloire des justes,” *AsSeign* 96 (Paris: Cerf, 1967), 7-17.

<sup>606</sup> Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 83 n. 22. See Larcher, *Le Livre*, 1:275. Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 83 n. 22, also adds: “Moreover, in the second half of the diptych, the subject ‘wicked’ [ἀσεβεῖς] reappears with reference to the reasoning of the wicked (3:10).”

<sup>607</sup> But they are at peace.

<sup>608</sup> But the righteous, though they die early, will be at rest.

<sup>609</sup> See the discussion on peace.

καὶ  
ἢ ἀφ' ἡμῶν πορεία  
σύντριμμα<sup>610</sup> (3:2-3a).

καὶ γὰρ ἐν ὄψει ἀνθρώπων ἐὰν κολασθῶσιν<sup>611</sup> (3:4a).

Here we can read that the wicked did not understand the death of the persecuted righteous. The chiasm included in 2b-3a emphasizes how the foolish misunderstood the righteous' death. But the author also mentions the wicked's lack of understanding with regard to the youth that died early:<sup>612</sup>

οἱ δὲ λαοὶ ἰδόντες καὶ μὴ νοήσαντες  
μηδὲ θέντες ἐπὶ διανοίᾳ τὸ τοιοῦτο<sup>613</sup> (4:14cd LXX).

ὄψονται γὰρ τελευτὴν σοφοῦ καὶ οὐ νοήσουσιν  
τί ἐβουλεύσατο περὶ αὐτοῦ  
καὶ εἰς τί ἡσφαλίσσατο αὐτὸν ὁ κύριος  
ὄψονται καὶ ἐξουθενήσουσιν<sup>614</sup> (4:17-18a).

4:14cd is structured by paralleling clauses, whereas 4:17-18a employs both chiasm and parallel. This shows the importance of arguing against a wrong idea of death. The author pays special attention to refute this wrong concept of death because the proper understanding of life and death is the key of openness towards God.<sup>615</sup> Death is linked to earthly life or, to put it other way around, life is linked to death. Those who misunderstand the concept of physical death,

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<sup>610</sup> In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be a disaster, and their going from us to be their destruction.

<sup>611</sup> For though in the sight of others they were punished.

<sup>612</sup> See Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 97 n. 45.

<sup>613</sup> Yet the peoples saw and did not understand, or take such a thing to heart.

<sup>614</sup> For they will see the end of the wise, and will not understand what the Lord purposed for them, and for what he kept them safe. The unrighteous will see, and will have contempt for them.

<sup>615</sup> Chap. 2 says that the righteous' death is not what it seems to be because God has a secret purpose for them (2:22-23; see also 3:1-5). Chap. 4 goes further: the righteous' death is God's intervention. Thus chap. 4 can be seen as the extension of what the author said in chap. 2 and it adds nuance to chap. 2: God fulfilled his secret purpose of ensuring immortality to the righteous by taking him up and, by this, protecting him from the evil that would cause his death.

misunderstand life as well. Physical death puts an end to life; in the eyes of the wicked it steals the meaning of life and even life itself. The author's argument underlines that both death and life are misunderstood by the wicked: physical death is not destruction for the righteous, but going to the Father's place, because life received from God does not end with physical death.

Another argument against distinguishing between two righteous is that both the righteous mentioned in chap. 3 and the one in chap. 4 are appointed as judges over the wicked.

κρinoῦσιν ἔθνη  
καὶ κρατήσουσιν λαῶν<sup>616</sup> (3:8ab).

κατακρινεῖ δὲ δίκαιος καμὼν τοὺς ζῶντας ἀσεβεῖς<sup>617</sup> (4:16a).

Since some of these verses will be dealt with again, I do not enter into details with regard to the metaphors employed by them. I only listed the possible arguments that support the fact that the persecuted righteous and the righteous who died early are the same.

Against these arguments, besides the fact that the first text mentions persecution, while the other mentions early death, is that the righteous' death in 4:10-14 seems to be God's saving action to prevent the perversion of the righteous, while chap. 3 says that God tested the righteous. But if we look at it carefully, we see that both texts emphasize God's intervention<sup>618</sup> behind the righteous' death<sup>619</sup> and that in both cases the righteous was worthy of God's action:

δικαίων δὲ ψυχὰι ἐν χειρὶ θεοῦ  
καὶ οὐ μὴ ᾗσηται αὐτῶν βάσανος  
...  
ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ἐπείρασεν αὐτοὺς

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<sup>616</sup> They will judge nations and rule over peoples [own trans.].

<sup>617</sup> But the righteous who have died will condemn the ungodly who are living.

<sup>618</sup> See also the meaning of ἐν καιρῷ ἐπισκοπῆς.

<sup>619</sup> See Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 97 n. 45.

καὶ εὗρεν αὐτοὺς ἀξίους ἑαυτοῦ<sup>620</sup> (3:1, 5cd).

ἡρπάγη

μὴ κακία ἀλλάξῃ σύνεσιν αὐτοῦ

ἢ δόλος ἀπατήσῃ ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ<sup>621</sup> (4:11).

We have dealt with this question to clarify whether we can talk about *the righteous* as such, or we should distinguish between two righteous. Our conclusion is that even if the text mentioned two righteous, we can still talk about *the righteous* because the aspects relevant for us can be found in both texts. These aspects are the following: physical death is not what it seems to be in the eyes of the wicked (3:2, 4; 4:14 LXX, 17-19); it is God acting behind the righteous' death (3:5; 4:10-14); in both texts the righteous is removed from their earthly realm into the realm of God (3:1ff; 4:10ff);<sup>622</sup> the righteous will judge the wicked in both texts (3:8; 4:16). Actually, what the author says in 3:10-4:20 seems concluded from the death of the righteous in 2:12-20. Nickelsburg may be right that Wis “extends the meaning of the story of the righteous man to include any righteous man who dies prematurely,”<sup>623</sup> as well as all the virtuous.<sup>624</sup>

With this conclusion we come back to the metaphor ALIVE IS UP. The author repeats three times that the righteous was taken up (4:10—μετετέθη; 4:11—ἡρπάγη; 4:14—ἔσπευσεν). The repetition shows that it seems to have a great importance for him to conceive of the righteous' death this way. Besides emphasizing the idea that God acted upon the moment of the righteous'

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<sup>620</sup> But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them. . . . because God tested them and found them worthy of himself.

<sup>621</sup> They were caught up so that evil might not change their understanding or guile deceive their souls.

<sup>622</sup> Cory, “Wisdom’s Rescue,” 111-112, notes that while in wisdom tales in general vindication takes place before death, in Wis it happens in the moment of death, just as in the case of Jesus’ death.

<sup>623</sup> Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life*, 129. Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life*, 89, however, notes two things: the exaltation (3:7f) “is not the prerogative of every righteous person. It is promised only to the persecuted righteous (3:1-9) and, in the context of the story, only to those who are put to death for the faith.” Further, the judgment scene is not cosmic; the righteous is not given the status of the judge of the world: “As in the wisdom tales, it describes the adjudication of a particular situation, the confrontation of a particular man and *his* persecutors” (*Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life*, 68). If this is so, then how do we explain 4:16 where the righteous who died early is said to condemn (κατακρινεῖ) the wicked? Could we not suppose that Wis uses the same extension that, according to Nickelsburg, is applied to the category of the righteous? If the category of the righteous is extended, then all the righteous could be judges as well.

<sup>624</sup> See Segal, *Life after Death*, 385.

death,<sup>625</sup> the act of taking up is emphasized. Ἡρπάγη<sup>626</sup>/μετετέθη<sup>627</sup> explains physical death as a movement;<sup>628</sup> the author does not say that the righteous died, but that he was taken up. The third verb, ἔσπευσεν also emphasizes God's action behind the death of the righteous.<sup>629</sup> This both means that he will continue living,<sup>630</sup> and also that he was taken up to the Kingdom of God where immortality is.<sup>631</sup> Physical death, however, is not denied, but it is seen as departure towards the final state of immortality. That the righteous is with God, removed from the earthly life, we can also see in 3:1ff and 5:15.<sup>632</sup> But looking at 5:15 once more, we see another aspect of the concept of immortality, the quantitative aspect; the righteous lives forever, which means that his life will not end with physical death but continues unbroken through death.<sup>633</sup> This is because God lifts him up to the domain of eternity. Immortality means to be in the care of God, with God (5:15bc).<sup>634</sup>

The verses analysed here refer to the departure of the righteous to God's realm in physical death. However, the righteous moves into the realm of God spiritually through the communion with

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<sup>625</sup> See Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 5. Cf. Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 85.

<sup>626</sup> Armin Schmitt, "Der frühe Tod des Gerechten nach Weisheit 4, 7-19 und die griechisch-römische Konsolationsliteratur," in *Der Gegenwart verpflichtet: Studien zur biblischen Literatur des Frühjudentums*, Armin Schmitt, ed. Christian J. Wagner, BZAW 292 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000), 204-222: the verb ἠρπάζω, the idea that the righteous was loved by God and was removed in order to avoid the perversion of his soul, as well as the verb σπεύδω show similarity to the description of early death in epitaphs. See also Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 140.

<sup>627</sup> Take up or take away; see "ἠρπάζω," *BDAG*, ad loc.; "μετατίθημι," *BDAG*, ad loc.

<sup>628</sup> Physical death appears as a movement in the wicked's view as well, who perceive it as departure to Hades (2:1c).

<sup>629</sup> "σπεύδω," *BDAG*, ad loc.: "To cause someth. to happen or come into being by exercising special effort."

<sup>630</sup> 4:10-11 reminds us of God taking Enoch up in Gen 5:24; see Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 84. Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 137, thinks that Wis employs the Enoch tradition "in order to extract from it a general principle of Divine Providence (paralleled in Hellenistic literature) which would justify the early death of the righteous."

<sup>631</sup> Winston on the contrary argues that God will destroy the evil on earth in Wis, "thus inaugurating a new, trans-historical era of divine rule" (*The Wisdom of Solomon*, 33). For a contrary opinion, see the above mentioned article of Collins, "The Kingdom of God in the Apocrypha."

<sup>632</sup> Matthew Goff, "Adam, the Angels and Eternal Life: Genesis 1-3 in the Wisdom of Solomon and 4QInstruction," in Xeravits and Zsengellér, *Studies in the Book of Wisdom*, 18-19, argues that 3:7; 2:13-18 and 5:15 shows the righteous elevated among the angels. However, this is rather a metaphor that describes the righteous' union with God.

<sup>633</sup> Εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα has a meaning similar to the eternity of God in 5:15 and 6:21; see Ramelli and Konstan, *Terms for Eternity*, 48. The righteous who is in God's realm shares in God's eternity; see also 2:23. For contrary opinion, see Clarke, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 42, who emphasizes the qualitative aspect of life.

<sup>634</sup> See also 3:1ff.

wisdom even before physical death when he becomes the child of God (2:13, 16, 18). What happens to the righteous in the moment of receiving life could be described in the following way: wisdom comes from up down to earth and takes the righteous up spiritually to the domain of eternity where he will be taken fully after his death. Thus the author conceives of the death of the righteous<sup>635</sup> as a movement upwards to the domain of up where life is. Prior to his death, the righteous was present in two levels of existence, the earthly existence and the spiritual one, but now he leaves the earthly existence behind and continues his life in the realm of God. Here we see very clearly that immortality is structured in terms of up.<sup>636</sup> What we also see is that immortality is defined as life with God. 5:15 includes another metaphor of immortality: LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE, extending *here* by *communion with God*.

#### 2.1.4 Conclusion: The Dynamics of the Three Realms

Up to now I described the cosmology of Wis that consists of a three-realm universe, namely, the Kingdom of God, Hades and the earth. I have discussed the qualitative and quantitative features of these realms, the doctrine of God and the anthropology of the book, paying special attention to those aspects that define certain elements of the concept of immortality. This was important so that we understand what the context of immortality is, what man's condition is in this universe, and how the concept of immortality is structured in terms of cosmology. This undertaking also helped us to recognize the factors that determine the fate of human beings and realize that immortality depends on man's relation to these realities. The text continuously confronted us with the fact that there is an underlying dynamics between these realms. I shall now turn to discuss this dynamics between these realms and summarize the concept of immortality against this background.

The discussion has started with the presentation of the realm of God. The qualities of this upper realm feature the qualities of its king: eternity and spirituality. The creation has a different

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<sup>635</sup> Contrary to the death of the wicked, which appears as ῥήγνυμι, dashing to the ground.

<sup>636</sup> This view on immortality does not exclude a Messianic Kingdom on earth, as Samuel Holmes, "*The Wisdom of Solomon*," in *Apocrypha*, ed. Robert H. Charles, vol.1 of *APOT*, ed. Robert H. Charles (Oxford: Clarendon, 1913; repr., Oxford: Clarendon, 1973), 529, points out; however, he also notes that the writer is not consistent with regards to this issue. We shall not attempt to clarify this question; what we find clearly emphasized in Wis is that immortality is seen as moving into the realm of God (up).



orientation and different qualities due to its created nature: it is limited and material. Nevertheless, this earthly realm was created for living (1:14); it was planned and ordered to be healthy and good, in harmony with its creator. There is a permanent relation between God and the earth through wisdom (8:1; 10:1ff; 12:1); God is the lord of the earth (5:17-23; 6:3-4). Wisdom establishes and sustains man's communion with God (7:14, 27-28); man is, thus, related to the Kingdom of God. So we can say that the earth is overlapped by the Kingdom of God. The third kingdom has no relation with the divine sphere and at the time of creation no relation with the earth either (1:12-14). However, there are some that do not understand and do not accept God's plan; they invite death (1:16a), and so death enters the human sphere. In this way, Hades' realm also overlaps the earth.

Depending on whether they accept or do not accept wisdom, people on the earth are divided into two groups: the righteous (δίκαιοι) and the unrighteous (ἄσεβεῖς or ἄδικοι).<sup>637</sup> Those who live with wisdom (see 1:1-4ff; 4:7-9) are the righteous, while those who grumble and have no connection with wisdom (1:4-5) are the unrighteous. The overlapping of the three spheres has consequences for human life. There are two dimensions present in human life, an earthly reality and a spiritual reality since both the righteous and the unrighteous are part of the earthly world and one of the spiritual worlds. In the earthly life both groups are in the same space, yet in the spiritual world they are separated, belonging to different worlds. The righteous that is linked to wisdom is also present in the realm of God besides being present on the earth. On the contrary, the other sphere of the unrighteous besides his earthly space is that of Hades. We can notice that the righteous and the unrighteous behave in a different way; their actions are also different. The righteous is virtuous (1:12-16). He pleases God (4:10a, 14a) and trusts Him (1:2; 3:9ab); he is undefiled, who has not done lawless things (3:13-14; 4:1). The unrighteous, on the other hand, grumbles (1:6-11; 2:1-5) and lives an unclean life (2:6-20). This difference in behaviour and actions shows us that people's identity, behaviour and actions are defined by the spiritual reality they belong to; so qualitatively the spiritual reality is more important and defining. The righteous' identity is defined by his belonging to God's realm as the child of God (2:13b, 16d, 18a), whereas the unrighteous identity is formed by the fact that he is the friend of Hades (1:16).

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<sup>637</sup> See Raurell, "From ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗ to ΘΑΝΑΣΙΑ," 335-336.

This subsequently shapes the actions of the righteous and the unrighteous. The ethical contrast between God and Hades extends to the righteous and unrighteous (2:12-16). Their actions point to the spiritual reality they belong to. Acting right shows that the righteous belongs to God; on the contrary, the wickedness of the unrighteous reveals their covenant with Hades.

The overlapping of the three worlds has another consequence related to the afterlife of the people. Since beside their earthly existence people also live in a spiritual reality, they already share the properties of this reality spiritually. The righteous who is part of the upper realm, shares the characteristics of the Kingdom of God that is immortality; this explains why only the righteous will partake in immortality. We can recognize here a concept of immortality that is a continuum; it does not only refer to the afterlife of the righteous, but it already begins on earth as spiritual life.<sup>638</sup> The fulfilment of the righteous' communion with God eventuates after death (3:1-9; 4:10, 11, 14; 5:1, 5, 15-16). We meet a similar concept of death in Wis. The wicked make covenant with death during their earthly life, so they already experience the qualities of this realm that is spiritual death (5:6-13). After their physical death the wicked will experience ultimate death (4:19f).

Another point should be made: the author stresses the impact of man's choice on his destiny.<sup>639</sup> The warning in 1:12 underlines the idea of responsibility. Once man chooses to live with wisdom or rejects her, he is drawn into a labyrinth that leads to eternal life or death (see 5:5-15). The sharp division of the righteous and the unrighteous on earth exposes a dichotomy; man can either be in God's kingdom or that of Hades, but he cannot belong to both parties at the same time because there is unbridgeable gap between God and death. Nonetheless, the picture is more complicated. Being present on the earth that belongs to God, the wicked could open up for a relationship with God and switch from one spiritual world to the other until they do not depart from the earth towards their final place. The author stresses that God will always give people a possibility to repent (11:20-26; 12:1-22). The opposite of this may also happen. Since there is interaction between the people on earth, the unrighteous can also influence the righteous, hence God's intervention in 4:11-12. This may be a reason why immortality is perceived via the

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<sup>638</sup> Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life*, 88–89, 162–164.

<sup>639</sup> Gilbert, "The Origins," 173: "life on earth will decide if the end corresponds with the origin."

metaphor ALIVE IS UP: because of the presence of the wicked on the earth, the righteous can be perverted by the wicked, so he has to be taken out of the earth up where life is.

Earthly life is a continuous contest between virtue and evil; man is always given a chance to repent, but there is also possibility to hesitate.<sup>640</sup> The possibility of making choices ends with physical death. Once the righteous and unrighteous die, they lose their earthly life and they remain in the spiritual world they have chosen. They will share either eternal life (1:15) or ultimate death (1:11; 2:24). As a consequence, the worldview of Wis is linear, since after death people go on living or sharing death analogous to their earthly life.<sup>641</sup> Nevertheless, the author is optimistic regarding the fate of humankind; his hope originates from his doctrine of creation. Man was created in incorruption (2:23); therefore, humanity cannot be oriented towards destruction (see 15:1-3).<sup>642</sup>

## 2.2 More on the Concept of Immortality—Immortality as Presence with God

Immortality serves as a translation for the terms ἀφθαρσία (2:23a; 6:18, 19) and ἄθανασία (3:4; 4:1; 8:13, 17; 15:3) used in Wis.<sup>643</sup> But as we discussed in the introduction, the meaning of a word is not restricted to the terminology, but it can also be conceptual. If we look at the occurrence of these terms, we can see that immortality is conceptualized as an entity<sup>644</sup> that can be given and received, categorized, and personified. These are ontological metaphors that conceptualize our experiences as entities; in this way it is possible to “refer to them, categorize them, group them, and quantify them—and, by this means, reason about them.”<sup>645</sup> Thus, by viewing immortality as an entity, the author is able to further perceive it as a state, substance, purpose, result, object, gift, and even a person. Wis extends the metaphorical conception of immortality by several other metaphors, too, such as being in the hand of God, remaining in love,

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<sup>640</sup> From the picture of the victorious marching of virtue (4:2), we can understand the idea of contest. We all have to pass the test of God (3:5), which is not a single moment but it takes all our life. As Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 128, notes: “In no other biblical passage is the moral option described in this manner.”

<sup>641</sup> Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life*, 162-164.

<sup>642</sup> See Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 142.

<sup>643</sup> For other terms related to immortality, see the discussion on cosmology.

<sup>644</sup> Similar conceptualization we see in John, where life is conceived as an entity again: a person *has* life; Jesus *gives* life.

<sup>645</sup> Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 25.

being at peace, being the child of God, being light, or being king in God's kingdom.<sup>646</sup> These metaphors perceive immortality in terms of presence in the realm of God; the metaphorical conceptions of being in the hand of God, remaining in love, at peace and so on are the elaborations of the metaphor of communion with God. As Lakoff and Turner say, "life and death are such all-encompassing matters that there can be no single conceptual metaphor that will enable us to comprehend them."<sup>647</sup> Each of the metaphors I present below relates to different aspects of the concept of immortality; by analysing them I hope to grasp the meaning of immortality in Wis more thoroughly. Some of these metaphors were already mentioned, but I did not analyse them in detail so that I do not create confusion in the discussion. Therefore, these metaphorical constructions will be looked at again with the exception of the family metaphor and the metaphor of friendship that were discussed above with relation to God.

As I mentioned earlier, the statements like IMMORTALITY IS PRESENCE are artificial constructions that express how the idea of immortality is conceived in Wis; these are not linguistic expressions found in the text. I use these structures, relying on Lakoff and Johnson, Lakoff and Turner, as well as Kövecses,<sup>648</sup> to see and show the relation between immortality and other concepts through which immortality is perceived in Wis. Thus IMMORTALITY IS PRESENCE WITH GOD is a structure explaining that immortality is viewed via the concept of presence with God. The idea arises from the observation that earthly life is perceived as one's presence on earth (2:1-5),<sup>649</sup> and by contrast immortality is perceived as one's presence in the realm of God/with God (5:15). The idea that is implied by this structure points at once to the continuity of life (being with God implies eternity since God is eternal), as well as underlines the aspect of relation, the idea that man is in the realm of God/with God. This idea of presence with God is then extended by the metaphors we discuss below.

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<sup>646</sup> The qualitative feature of *life* is underlined by Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 40, who also mentions freedom from pain (Wis 3:1)—besides all these metaphors listed above—, which we discuss together with *peace*.

<sup>647</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 2.

<sup>648</sup> Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*; Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*; Zoltán Kövecses, *Metaphor*.

<sup>649</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 98.

### 2.2.1 Immortality as Presence and Destination

The ontological metaphors we treat in this section may seem contradictory at the first sight: immortality is perceived both as a state and a purpose. Nevertheless, our discussion aims at proving the consistency of these two metaphors.

The text that creates the issue is part of the author's concluding remark after the false reasoning of the wicked in chap. 2.

καὶ οὐκ ἔγνωσαν μυστήρια θεοῦ  
οὐδὲ μιστὸν ἤλπισαν ὁσιότητος  
οὐδὲ ἔκρισαν γέρας ψυχῶν ἀμώμων  
ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ἔκτισεν τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐπ' ἀφθαρσίᾳ  
καὶ εἰκόνα τῆς ἰδίας ἀϊδιότητος ἐποίησεν αὐτόν<sup>650</sup> (2:22-23).

The text says that man was created ἐπ' ἀφθαρσίᾳ. The anticipation of the statement is the false reasoning of the wicked (2:1b-5) about life's transience. The author returns and pronounces his conclusion of the wicked's reasoning: they were led astray (2:21) because "they did not know the secret purposes of God" (2:22) that "God created us for incorruption, and made us in the image of his own eternity" (2:23). 2:23 extends the idea of 2:22; accordingly we can understand that incorruption was the Creator's secret purpose for humankind.<sup>651</sup> The verse has a link with 1:14, too, explaining that the created man is meant for living because the eternal God created him "in the image of his own eternity."<sup>652</sup>

If we look at the term ἐπ' ἀφθαρσίᾳ, we can either interpret it as a state or a purpose. The preposition ἐπί with the dative case would allow for the conceptualization of incorruption both as

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<sup>650</sup> And they did not know the secret purposes of God, nor hoped for the wages of holiness, nor discerned the prize for blameless souls; for God created us for incorruption, and made us in the image of his own eternity.

<sup>651</sup> In 1 Enoch 103:2; Dan 2:27-30, 47; 4:6-9ff, too, the doctrine concerning the afterlife is referred to as a mystery. See Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 120; Puech, "The Book of Wisdom," 128. Collins, "Apocalyptic Eschatology in Philosophical Dress," 99, notes that, "despite the apocalyptic overtones of the word mystery, however, the book gives no account of angelic revelation such as we find in *Enoch* or *Daniel*." See also Kolarcik, "Sapiential Values and Apocalyptic Imagery," 31, who also mentions that mystery here "refers not to a special knowledge given to a select few," but to the reward of the just.

<sup>652</sup> Collins, "The Mysteries of God," 294: "Immortality was not strictly a reward for righteousness, however. It was the original design of the creator for all humanity."

a state and a purpose.<sup>653</sup> To begin with the first option, the metaphor that views immortality as a state is LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE with *here* extended as the *realm of God*. This metaphor, as we have already mentioned, views life in spatial terms, as a bounded region.<sup>654</sup> According to this reading, 2:23 would describe immortality as a state. Reese says that “man’s original condition was to be ἐπ’ ἀφθαρσία ‘in’ or ‘with’ incorruption, not ‘for’ incorruption.”<sup>655</sup> 2:23b that parallels 2:23a supports the idea that incorruption is viewed as the original state of man.<sup>656</sup> Immortality is perceived “not as man’s goal but as the positive quality granted to his nature enabling him to enter into a special, personal relationship with his Creator.”<sup>657</sup> Αἰδιότης<sup>658</sup> signifies *eternal* in the absolute sense: without beginning or end.<sup>659</sup> God’s eternity is obviously a state and not a purpose. Going further, εἰκών<sup>660</sup> means image, likeness, or form, appearance; thus the term denotes representation, but also manifestation; this latter can be a “visible manifestation of an invisible and heavenly reality” or “an embodiment or living manifestation of God” (Col 1:15).<sup>661</sup> But here we have εἰκόνα τῆς ἰδίας αἰδιότητος. Does human being depict or manifest God’s eternity?<sup>662</sup> If we take into consideration that it is God’s life that is shared by the righteous, εἰκόνα τῆς ἰδίας αἰδιότητος has to be taken as manifestation. As Reese says, man

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<sup>653</sup> See “ἐπί,” *BDAG*, ad loc.

<sup>654</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 98.

<sup>655</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 66. Reese also notes that ἐπί with the dative case “clearly indicates a state in Wis 1.13; 17.3,7; 18.13. That he viewed man’s original condition as an incorrupt state is seen also in 14.12” (*Hellenistic Influence*, 66 n. 158). See also Amir, “The Figure of Death,” 161: “Man is constituted, by the very act of creation, as it were by definition, as an immortal being.”

<sup>656</sup> Clarke, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 27: although εἰκών is a Platonic expression, the background of the idea in Wis 2:23 is Gen 1:26-27.

<sup>657</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 66.

<sup>658</sup> There are two readings here: αἰδιότης (eternity) and ἰδιότης (likeness), but the latter also implies eternity since God’s nature is eternal; see Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 70. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 131-132 n. 25: “The use of a flashback here [in 14:12-14] supports the reading of ‘eternity’ in 2.23.”

<sup>659</sup> See Ramelli and Konstan, *Terms for Eternity*, 48-49. It always refers to God in Wis: man is created in the image of God’s own eternity, wisdom is the reflection of eternal light (φωτὸς αἰδίου; see 7:26).

<sup>660</sup> Maurice Gilbert, “La relecture de Gn 1-3 dans le Livre de la Sagesse,” in *La création dans l’orient ancien: Congrès de l’ACFEB, Lille (1985)*, ed. Paul Beauchamp et al., LD 127 (Paris: Cerf, 1987), 326-327, and Larcher, *Le Livre*, 1:267-268, observe that while in Gen 1:27 LXX man is made κατ’ εἰκόνα θεοῦ, in the image of God, here it is made *the image*. See also O. Flender, “εἰκών,” *NIDNTT* 2:287.

<sup>661</sup> “εἰκών,” *ANLEX*, ad loc. See also “εἰκών,” *L&N*, ad loc.; “εἰκών,” *BDAG*, ad loc.

<sup>662</sup> Egyptians, Canaanites and Mesopotamians believed that gods manifest themselves through their statues. So the purpose of image was function rather than a description of a deity. See Susan Ackerman, “Idol, Idolatry,” *EDB*, 626; E. M. Curtis, “Image of God,” *ABD* 3:390-391; William H. Propp, “Graven Image,” *OCB*, 261. Curtis, *ABD* 3:390-391: the Egyptian understanding of image shows that “man was created in the image of God” has to do with function and position, rather than form.

receives “a sharing in God’s own ‘eternity.’”<sup>663</sup> The idea is also related to man’s kingship that we discussed above: man as the image of God rules over creation.<sup>664</sup> This may be strengthened by 7:26c, where wisdom is called the image of God’s goodness, εἰκὼν τῆς ἀγαθότητος αὐτοῦ.<sup>665</sup>

The other reading is to understand ἐπ’ ἀφθαρσία as a purpose. Verse 2:22 also seems to conceive of immortality as a purpose and not as a state:

καὶ οὐκ ἔγνωσαν μυστήρια θεοῦ  
οὐδὲ μιστὸν ἥλπισαν ὁσιότητος  
οὐδὲ ἔκρισαν γέρας ψυχῶν ἀμώμων<sup>666</sup>

22bc explains 22a: the secrets of God are the “wages of holiness” and “prize for blameless souls.” Because of the nouns μιστός and γέρας, immortality is perceived as an entity the righteous have to strive for, a *reward* and *prize* (2:22bc) for a virtuous life (see also 4:10, 14).

Now we turn to the paradox we have described above, that immortality appears to be the state and the purpose of the righteous at the same time. It seems quite possible that the reading of ἐπ’ ἀφθαρσία as state and purpose is not contradictory. The text is not only open to both interpretations, it actually encompasses both. The metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY views our purposes in life as destinations.<sup>667</sup> Immortality is a purpose for the righteous that are walking on the path of righteousness (11:1-2ff; cf. 5:7). Via DEATH IS DEPARTURE combined with STATES ARE LOCATIONS we can see that immortality is a final state that one reaches after death. LIFE IS PRESENCE IN THE REALM OF GOD shows immortality as the state of existing with God. 5:15 especially connects immortality with the realm of God. This also leads to another conclusion:

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<sup>663</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 67. Comparing the interpretation on Gen 1-3 in Wis and 4QInstructions, Goff, “Adam, the Angels and Eternal Life,” 15, says: “The Qumran text contrues the ‘image’ as a sort of heavenly paradigm that influences the creation of one type of humankind, whereas in the Wisdom of Solomon humanity itself was originally created as the divine ‘image,’ a reflection or copy of God’s being.”

<sup>664</sup> Flender, *NIDNTT* 2:287.

<sup>665</sup> Wis 7:25-26 says about wisdom that she is a pure emanation (ἀπόρροια) of the glory of God, and a reflection (ἀπαύγασμα) of eternal light—Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 278, notes that these nouns are used in active sense as radiance or effulgence that is “coming forth from the light source as an integral expression of it” and not as reflection. This underlines the idea of manifestation.

<sup>666</sup> And they did not know the secret purposes of God, nor hoped for the wages of holiness, nor discerned the prize for blameless souls.

<sup>667</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 3.

immortality is not inherent in man; even when Wis says that man was created in incorruption, immortality still remains the quality of the communion with God and wisdom.<sup>668</sup> The life that is described as presence with God has the notion of arrival in the case of the believers. By ὁ θεὸς ἔκτισεν τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐπ' ἀφθαρσία one should, therefore, understand that immortality is “not a quality of man’s nature as such but rather something outside of him, a result of divine power.”<sup>669</sup> As we will see more clearly below, man receives immortality in his communion with wisdom (6:12; 7:10, 14, 27; 8:2, 18; also chaps. 7-9).<sup>670</sup> Immortality is, therefore, further elaborated as the *gift*<sup>671</sup> of God (3:13-16; 8:13, 17; 16:20-26; 19:21), which again emphasizes that it is given from above.<sup>672</sup> In the two latter passages, wisdom is associated with manna:<sup>673</sup>

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<sup>668</sup> Discussing Sir 17:3, Martin Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in their Encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period*, trans. John Bowden, rev. ed., 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981), 1:149, says that “being in the image of God (17.3) did not yet mean identity of being; man was above all directed towards God’s mercy (18.11-14).”

<sup>669</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 66. He also goes on to say that “in contrast to Plato, the Sage never applies the term immortality to man or the human soul. It always designates something that happens to man, some aspect of his relationship to God or to divine Wisdom or to moral integrity. Immortality for man is not a quality of his nature as such but of a particular condition . . . its origin is God, who bestows it only upon the just and the wise” (*Hellenistic Influence*, 64). Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 65, also notes that Wis “shows closer kinship with the Stoic teaching that man’s happiness comes from the enjoyment of common citizenship with the gods in the universe.” See also Festugière, *Le Dieu cosmique*, 270-277; Bennema, *The Power of Saving Wisdom*, 61-62.

<sup>670</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 71: the author “was conscious that a distinction had to be made between the relationship of all men to God which springs from human nature itself and that enjoyed only by the just man. On the one hand, God loves all that he created, because otherwise nothing could continue to exist (11.24-25). On the other hand, however, without divine Wisdom man is of no account (9.6).”

<sup>671</sup> The properties, relations, knowledge of the source domain are mapped into the target domain: a gift is given with a purpose in which the other person’s happiness/well-being is implied, thus immortality is conceived as something positive, a gift is never taken back, but it can be given away and it can be lost.

<sup>672</sup> As Bellia and Passaro, “Infinite Passion for Justice,” 318, sums up, “notwithstanding the philosophical terminology adopted, the anthropological vision of Wisdom does not make reference to the Greek concept of dualism but remains anchored in the biblical and Semitic tradition: the immortality of the just person does not derive from the nature of the soul and its pre-existence, as in Plato, because the after-life is given from on high.” Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 62-71, stresses the Hellenistic influence on Wis, but immortality stays a gift of God, not the nature of the soul; without God man “remains strictly ‘mortal’ (15.17)” (67). See also Wright, “Wisdom,” 557; Vilchez and Eynikel, “Wisdom of Solomon,” 978; Wright, *The Resurrection*, 174. Puech, “The Book of Wisdom,” 127-132, also emphasizes that in spite of the Greek terminology, the anthropology of the author stays more Semitic than Greek. Likewise Collins, “The Mysteries of God,” 294, notes that the author of Wis remained Jewish in the idea that “immortality was contingent on righteousness.” Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 67-68: “Every creature continues in existence only because God places his ‘incorruptible spirit’ (12.1) upon them. . . . Here the technical term ‘incorrupt’ attributes to divine power the permanence of the natural order because God’s spirit maintains each species of creature in existence.”



ἀνθ' ὧν ἀγγέλων τροφήν ἐνώμισας τὸν λαόν σου  
καὶ ἔτοιμον ἄρτον ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ παρέσχες αὐτοῖς ἀκοπιάτως  
παῖσαν ἡδονὴν ἰσχύοντα  
καὶ πρὸς παῖσαν ἀρμόνιον γεῦσιν<sup>674</sup> (16:20).

Wisdom provides manna for the hungry, but this manna is not only to quench physical hunger, it is the “food of angels,”<sup>675</sup> or as 19:21 calls it, γένος ἀμβροσίας τροφῆς.<sup>676</sup> In the Exodus account of Wis, manna becomes the food of immortality.<sup>677</sup> And as the text says, this happened that the righteous may know that it is not the daily bread that feeds humankind, but the word of God that gives immortality: ἀλλὰ τὸ ῥῆμά σου τοὺς σοὶ πιστεύοντας διατηρεῖ (16:26c).<sup>678</sup> In Wis’ storytelling the Exodus event, thus, gets eschatological connotation: wisdom provides people

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<sup>673</sup> This provides a more nuanced comparison with the Johannine Bread of Life motif, since wisdom is also the gift of God (7:7; 8:21; 9:4), and owning wisdom results in immortality (6:12-21).

<sup>674</sup> Instead of these things you gave your people food of angels, and without their toil you supplied them from heaven with bread ready to eat, providing every pleasure and suited to every taste.

<sup>675</sup> Tobias Nicklas, “‘Food of Angels’ (Wis 16:20),” in Xeravits and Zsengellér, *Studies in the Book of Wisdom*, 83-100, takes a look at several early Jewish texts that parallel the manna motif in Wis 16:20-23; some of these texts speak of “food of angels” that is different from earthly food. Nicklas finds especially close connection with Ps 77:24-25, 19-20 LXX and Num 11:7-8 LXX, and points out (“‘Food of Angels,’” 92) that “Wis 16:20-23 does not only use Ps 77:24-25 LXX, but also reworks other biblical traditions about the manna—and this way exemplifies the image of the ‘food of angels.’”

<sup>676</sup> A kind of heavenly food. Beauchamp, “Le salut,” 509: *ambrosial* refers to “food conferring immortality” to gods. See also Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 70; Gilbert, “The Origins,” 182; Passaro, “The Serpent and the Manna,” 183-184; Nicklas, “‘Food of Angels,’” 94-95. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 70: “by comparing the biblical manna to ambrosia he [the author] presents it as a type of the divine gift that alone” ensures immortality. Reese also notes that παῖσαν ἡδονὴν ἰσχύοντα (16:20c) describes the manna as “the food of angels” that is suited to every taste, thus referring to the righteous’ eternal happiness (*Hellenistic Influence*, 69). “Behind this phrase is a recollection of the Epicurean teaching that eternal happiness embraces the enjoyment of uninterrupted pleasure” (Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 70).

<sup>677</sup> See Beauchamp, “Le salut,” 508-509. Wis 16:26 makes clear that manna points to something else, not just the Exodus story, but, in the words of Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 376, to a “larger verity,” i.e. God and eternal life. József Zsengellér, “‘The Taste of Paradise’: Interpretation of Exodus and Manna in the Book of Wisdom, in Xeravits and Zsengellér, *Studies in the Book of Wisdom*, 215: by using “food of angels” and “ambrosia” for manna, “the author connects manna with immortality.” See the parallel in John 6:27. See ancient Jewish parallels in Nicklas, “‘Food of Angels,’” 94-95, who also observes that different texts attribute different characteristics to ambrosia, and raises the question: “Has this also been of influence to the idea that the manna as food of angels suits to every taste (Wis 16:20c)?” (95). Nicklas, “‘Food of Angels,’” 93, considers Num 11:8 LXX as a possible background for παῖσαν ἀρμόνιον γεῦσιν.

<sup>678</sup> But that your word sustains those who trust in you. See Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 69; Zsengellér, “‘The Taste of Paradise,’” 206-216.

with the *bread* of immortality from heaven; she becomes the manna.<sup>679</sup> In these instances we can see the connection of heaven and earth.<sup>680</sup> Wisdom also provides water in the desert:

ἐδίγησαν καὶ ἐπεκαλέσαντό σε  
καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτοῖς  
ἐκ πέτρας ἀκροτόμου  
ὕδωρ  
καὶ  
ἵαμα δίψης  
ἐκ λίθου σκληροῦ<sup>681</sup> (11:4).

The Exodus experience has eschatological dimension, so it appears that water provided by God in 11:4 also points beyond earthly water to wisdom and immortality. McGlynn<sup>682</sup> links the passage to 7:7, where the same prayer brings wisdom and her gifts to Solomon, and 6:12-20, which already emphasizes the importance of training that Israel experiences during the Exodus: “Deuteronomy’s description of abundance in the Promised Land becomes in Wisdom, because of the promise contained in the sorites, the first steps along a road which has as its destination an immortal kingdom reached by discipline and training.”<sup>683</sup>

We can also see that the righteous already reaches the state of spiritual immortality on earth through the communion with wisdom who makes him the child of God (2:13, 16, 18). Thus existence with God is the present state of the children of God. It is purposed for everyone, but

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<sup>679</sup> McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 198-199, enumerates the similarities between manna and wisdom. Manna is a gift of God just like wisdom (16:25; cf. 8:21). They both give knowledge (16:26; cf. 7:22-25); their function in sustaining the creation is similar (16:21; cf. 8:1; 7:28). Manna is imperishable similarly to wisdom (16:22; cf. 7:24, 26). Furthermore; they both have “preserving quality” (16:26; cf. 7:27, 28; 8:17). Zsengellér, “The Taste of Paradise,” 216, however, notes that “the author of the Book of Wisdom makes a very fine distinction not to use this direct allegory.” He further concludes that wisdom is presented as “*the taste of paradise*” since it provides people “the opportunity of immortality” (“The Taste of Paradise,” 216).

<sup>680</sup> See Zsengellér, “The Taste of Paradise,” 216.

<sup>681</sup> When they were thirsty, they called upon you, and water was given them out of flinty rock, and from hard stone a remedy for their thirst.

<sup>682</sup> McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 182-184.

<sup>683</sup> McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 184. Note that McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 182-183, follows Larcher, *Le Livre*, 3:656, in saying that Wis’ account of water from the rock is based on Deut 8:1-16 and not Num 20:6 or Exod 17:4.

only the righteous share it because the wicked lack the communion with wisdom (5:7). Immortality again appears as a relational concept: God purposes it for everyone, but it only comes to realization in the relationship of man with God. In other words, man was created in the image of God's eternity, but this affinity with God only comes into life in the dynamics of man's relationship with God.

To conclude, the metaphors that view immortality as presence and purpose show the different aspects of the concept. We could also say that there is a double perspective on immortality in Wis, where 2:23 is the perspective of God, while 2:22 describes the perspective of man who strives for immortality. From God's perspective immortality is a present state in the sense of God's permanently available gift for all, whereas from man's perspective, who prays to God for wisdom (chaps. 7-9), it is a goal that can be reached through wisdom. Winston describes these two perspectives with regard to wisdom and his conclusion is similar: "From the human viewpoint, the Divine Wisdom enters man and departs; from the eternal perspective of God, however, it is ever present to man, though its consummation in any particular case is conditioned by the fitness of the recipient."<sup>684</sup>

There are two issues that still need consideration in this section. 1. Is it possible that the two aspects on immortality (as a present state and a goal) refer to the state before and after the Fall?<sup>685</sup> Against this we could say that Wis texts seems to argue that immortality was never man's inherent nature, it was always received only in relation to God (as presence in the realm of God), so the state before and after the Fall does not change anything in this respect. Man's nature always had two aspects: mortality and immortality according to Wis.<sup>686</sup> Still the two aspects can

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<sup>684</sup> Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 41-42.

<sup>685</sup> See the idea of the Fall, in Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 66; Larcher, *Le Livre*, 1:267; Collins, "The Mysteries of God," 299; Goff, "Adam, the Angels and Eternal Life," 7-12.

<sup>686</sup> Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 140: "The relationship between mortality and the sin of disobedience of Adam and Eve is certainly not necessarily reducible to a relationship of causality." Then Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 146, goes on: "How exactly the author of Wis understood the primeval accounts of creation is not easy to establish . . . But it should be clear that the interpretation whereby human mortality is taken as the consequence of Adam's disobedience is not self evident in Wis. Moreover, the interpretation of the allegorical tradition of Gen as exemplified in Philo would certainly have been known to our author." Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 169, even argues that because of the "positive treatment of the mortality of the just," it is more likely that mortality was seen as part of human condition. Because of its context, the statement that "God did not make death" in 1:13 does not refer to mortality. See the discussion on this above at the section

refer to the Fall,<sup>687</sup> and it makes sense in one respect: the two viewpoints could also refer to man's perspective before and after the Fall. Wis clearly shows that God did not depart from man (he was always there for him through wisdom); it is only man who left God and has to find his way back through wisdom. In this case, I would say that the perspective of man before the Fall overlaps God's perspective, while after the Fall the perspective of human being lacks the understanding of God's purposes.

2. Another question is the physical notion of ἀφθαρσία. Wisdom never explicitly includes physicality in the notion of ἀφθαρσία.<sup>688</sup> Ἐπ' ἀφθαρσία, however, can imply more than the immortality of the soul considering the background image of Gen.<sup>689</sup> Even if we were not to accept the argument based on Gen 2-3,<sup>690</sup> the eschatology of Wis placed into cosmological framework may persuade us to see a bodily aspect of incorruptibility of the just.<sup>691</sup> Moreover, since 2:23 is the answer for the wicked's lamentation, who is concerned mostly about physical corruption, we could assume that incorruption may implicitly include the incorruption of the body, too.

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on ultimate death. Hogan, "The Exegetical Background of the 'Ambiguity of Death,'" 3-24 also supports this idea.

<sup>687</sup> To the question whether the Fall is related to some event in the past or it appears as a myth perceiving something happening in every man's life, we can say in line with Amir, "The Figure of Death," 166, that Wis seems to project the Fall as "part of the human condition in general," rather than a historical event. Thus, it is not only something universal, but a condition that affects each individual; hence each man has to request and acquire wisdom (chaps. 7-9) to share immortality.

<sup>688</sup> Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 70; Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 66, talk about "blessed immortality."

<sup>689</sup> Gilbert, "The Origins," 174, concludes that *incorruptibility* could imply "a participation of the body in the afterlife."

<sup>690</sup> Larcher, *Le Livre*, 1:267, includes a nuance of physical incorruptibility in ἀφθαρσία based on his interpretation of Gen 2-3; Gilbert, "La relecture," 327, however, notes that the author does not mention bodily immortality. Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 138-139, notes that ἀφθαρσία is mentioned again only in 6:18-19 where it "unambiguously denotes an ethical value." Hogan, "The Exegetical Background of the 'Ambiguity of Death,'" 16, also concludes that "2:23 is clearly not about physical immortality . . . but about spiritual immortality."

<sup>691</sup> Gilbert, "The Origins," 182: "If the Exodus also had an eschatological dimension, then it must be said that the eschatology of our author . . . must include, even there, a cosmic element, of which the manna is the sign. Therefore it becomes difficult to deny the concrete meaning of this 'incorruptibility' promised to the just in Wis 2:23a: implicitly the participation of their bodies in their happiness in the company of God is supposed and even implied."

### 2.2.2 The Symbiosis of Immortality with Wisdom

Immortality is the state of presence with God. As we have mentioned several times, man can relate to the divine through wisdom that is the only possibility for man to reach communion with God and be immortal. Let us now examine closely how this communion functions. Firstly, we shall remember that wisdom is in communion with God (8:3; 9:4, 9). This communion becomes present in wisdom's communion with man (6:12, 14; 7:10, 14, 27-28; 8:2-18).<sup>692</sup> Winston notes that "the terms of the description of Wisdom's union with God correspond very closely to those of the description of the student's union with Wisdom. This undoubtedly implies that man's ultimate goal is union with God, which may, however, be achieved only through union with His Wisdom, which is but one of His aspects."<sup>693</sup> The first aspect of the union of wisdom with God and the union of wisdom with man is what we see in 9:4 and 6:14 that show wisdom sitting at the throne of God, and later on at the gate of the righteous.

δός μοι τὴν τῶν σῶν θρόνων πάρεδρον σοφίαν<sup>694</sup> (9:4a).

πάρεδρον γὰρ εὕρησει τῶν πυλῶν αὐτοῦ<sup>695</sup> (6:14b).

These texts do not only imply a close relationship between wisdom and God, and wisdom and man, but they also reveal the humility of wisdom in these relationships. Sitting at the throne and at the gate shows that wisdom is eager to do the will of God. She hurries to meet people (6:13, 16); she takes initiative in her union with man.<sup>696</sup> However, 9:4a expresses the condition of receiving wisdom: she will only be found by those who seek her (1:1-2; 6:12bc-15). Man has to desire wisdom (6:11-20; 8:2)<sup>697</sup> and pray for her (7:7; 8:21-9:18).<sup>698</sup> Prayer means opening up to

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<sup>692</sup> Bennema, *The Power of Saving Wisdom*, 62: one can be in communion with God through wisdom because wisdom is in communion with God; thus the one who has a relationship with wisdom also experiences God (7:25-26; 8:3-4; 9:4, 9-10).

<sup>693</sup> Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 41. For the passages subject to comparison, see Wisdom, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 41 n. 56.

<sup>694</sup> Give me the wisdom that sits by your throne.

<sup>695</sup> For she will be found sitting at the gate.

<sup>696</sup> See Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 40.

<sup>697</sup> See Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 103; Gilbert, "Wisdom Literature," 310. McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 107: "In ancient, near-eastern traditions of kingship, wisdom was the gift a ruler received on his accession . . . In

the divine, which results in a relationship with wisdom. Nevertheless, wisdom's vigilance also reveals God's willingness to save humankind (11:24ff); his love and desire to save man is the anticipation of man's desire and search for God.<sup>699</sup> This dynamics reveals the double perspective on wisdom pointed out by Winston<sup>700</sup> and discussed above. God gives wisdom as a gift (7:7; 8:21; 9:4), but only those whose heart is open (1:1-2) can receive her.

8:3; 6:12; 7:10; 8:2, 18 depict the relation of wisdom and God and that of wisdom and man in terms of love:

ταύτην ἐφίλησα καὶ ἐξεζήτησα ἐκ νεότητός μου  
καὶ ἐζήτησα νύμφην ἀγαγέσθαι ἐμαυτῷ  
...  
εὐγένειαν δοξάζει συμβίωσιν θεοῦ ἔχουσα  
καὶ ὁ πάντων δεσπότης ἡγάπησεν αὐτήν<sup>701</sup> (8:2-3).

Since we shall deal with love later, we do not enter into discussion, but only mention that love is another aspect that is shared by both relationships. 8:3 views the union of wisdom and God as a symbiosis, a "community of life."<sup>702</sup> This is also true of wisdom's relationship with man: ἔκρινα τοίνυν ταύτην ἀγαγέσθαι πρὸς συμβίωσιν<sup>703</sup> (8:9a). The relation between man and wisdom is actually described by the use of sexual imagery in many texts (see 6:12-14; 7:28; 8:2-18)<sup>704</sup> and it expresses the union of wisdom and man in terms of matrimonial relationship. The relationship

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Wisdom, this gift is no longer an automatic part of the process . . . wisdom is to be desired." Note the emphasis on learning in 6:1-21.

<sup>698</sup> McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 107, observes that acquiring wisdom does not need any ritual; the one who requests wisdom from God (7:7; 9:4), who learns (6:9, 11, 17), will receive her: "Wisdom's availability, then, is not presented as a mystical experience but a rational one."

<sup>699</sup> See also at the discussion on love.

<sup>700</sup> Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 41-42.

<sup>701</sup> I loved her and sought her from my youth; I desired to take her for my bride . . . She glorifies her noble birth by living with God, and the Lord of all loves her.

<sup>702</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 41.

<sup>703</sup> Therefore I determined to take her to live with me.

<sup>704</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 39-40: "Although sexual imagery is common in hellenistic (*sic*) religious literature, the only other places in the canonical Old Testament where it appears in the context of union with Wisdom are Sir 15.1-8 and 51.13-21." Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 40, also notices that Sirach, however, does not develop the theme to the depth of Wis. See also Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 189, 192-193, for Jewish and Hellenistic sexual imagery of the union of wisdom and man.

between husband and wife is mapped onto the relationship of wisdom and man. Wisdom is conceived as a bride; she is explicitly called νύμφη<sup>705</sup> in 8:2. This implies that man is the husband or bridegroom of wisdom. As we can see from the same text, wisdom's communion with God also has this aspect; this suggests that the union with God can only be achieved through union with wisdom that lives with God.

The metaphor conceptualizes an even closer connection between wisdom/God and man. Marital metaphor involves not only living together, but also mutuality, love and commitment. It emphasizes that the one who lives with wisdom cannot love death and will never belong to death. Although friendship with God also includes this nuance, since being the friend of God does not allow one to be the friend of Hades as well, but the metaphor of matrimony underlines it. It also allows us to compare the relationship between wisdom and the righteous with the wicked's commitment to Hades.

Going further with the analysis of man's union with wisdom and God, we read 7:27c stating:

καὶ κατὰ γενεὰς      εἰς ψυχὰς ὁσίας      μεταβαίνουσα  
                          φίλους θεοῦ καὶ προφήτας      κατασκευάζει<sup>706</sup>

The text uses the ontological metaphor that views human body as a container;<sup>707</sup> this lets one perceive the relationship between wisdom and man in terms of the relationship between the container and the contained. The relationship between wisdom and man is, thus, viewed in terms of being in each other. Therefore wisdom can be pictured entering the souls (1:4; 7:24, 27). The result of wisdom's entering human souls is that they are transformed into friends of God and prophets.<sup>708</sup> So the symbiosis with wisdom leads to a new existence which contains the surety of immortality since this new life does not end with physical death. The metaphor of the union with wisdom also perceives immortality as presence in the realm of God.

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<sup>705</sup> Bride.

<sup>706</sup> In every generation she passes into holy souls and makes them friends of God, and prophets.

<sup>707</sup> For the container metaphors, see Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 29-32.

<sup>708</sup> See the discussion on knowledge below.

I would like to suggest that we go even further and analyse this via the Great Chain Metaphor described by Lakoff and Turner<sup>709</sup> because the metaphor does not only disclose a very close unity between wisdom and man, but it also reveals the characteristics of this relationship. We have mentioned the metaphor already but we did not describe it yet. The Great Chain Metaphor is actually a complex ensemble consisting of four parts: the Great Chain cultural model, the Nature of Things theory, the GENERIC IS SPECIFIC metaphor and the Maxim of Quantity principle. All these parts are needed in conceiving a higher order being in terms of a lower order being or the other way around. The Great Chain is a cultural model that consists of a vertical scale on which higher order beings and lower order beings are placed; naturally it also includes the scale of the properties that characterize these beings.<sup>710</sup> The Nature of Things theory links these properties to certain behaviour.<sup>711</sup> The GENERIC IS SPECIFIC metaphor “maps a single specific-level schema onto an indefinitely large number of parallel specific-level schemas that all have the same generic-level structure as the source domain schema.”<sup>712</sup> Thus, it “allows us to understand a whole category of situations in terms of one particular situation.”<sup>713</sup> The Maxim of Quantity communicative principle restricts the application of properties from one domain into another; it picks up “the highest-ranking properties” defining that level.<sup>714</sup> Via the Great Chain Metaphor we understand that higher order beings (human beings) are understood in terms of lower order beings (complex objects). The Nature of Things theory together with the Great Chain of Being helps us understand that complex objects have “structural attributes” that lead to “functional behaviour.”<sup>715</sup> Due to the Maxim of Quantity that restricts the application of the properties, the perception of human beings as containers in which wisdom dwells has to be viewed in terms of structural attributes and functional behaviour, the “highest-ranking

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<sup>709</sup> See the whole description of the Great Chain Metaphor in Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 160-213.

<sup>710</sup> The scale of the Great Chain of Being from the bottom to the top is as follows: natural physical things, complex objects, plants, animals and human beings—this is the basic Great Chain. The basic Great Chain can be extended to include society, God and cosmos. See Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 170-171, 204-213. Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 128, notes that in the Jewish-Christian tradition God is on the top.

<sup>711</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 169.

<sup>712</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 162.

<sup>713</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 165.

<sup>714</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 173.

<sup>715</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 171.



properties”<sup>716</sup> of complex objects. The container and the contained together form a unit; this is a functional unity. The unity of wisdom with God and the unity of wisdom with man are also functional. God is the guide of wisdom (7:15); wisdom is the mirror of the working of God and an image of his goodness (7:26). All these show functionality; God creates and directs the cosmos and humankind through wisdom (9:1-2; 8:1). Similarly, man receives knowledge from wisdom and learns how to act and behave in a way that pleases God (9:9-10; also chap. 6). Thus, further associations of intimacy with God are knowledge and unity in function, for which wisdom is an example (8:4). This metaphor is even more elaborated in John where we find several instances of the metaphor that pictures God and Jesus abiding in each other and in man.

To sum up, the relation between God and man is established through wisdom (1:1-5; 7:14; also 3:15; 4:9a; 6:10; 7:14, 27; 9:9-12); in other words, the transcendent God relates to man through his wisdom. Since wisdom is in communion with God, man who enters the communion with wisdom will also be in communion with God. As a result of this union with the eternal God, man receives a new existence that makes him immortal since this new life does not end with physical death. The union of man with wisdom and God also has functional aspects: man receives knowledge and learns to act according to the will of God.

### 2.2.3 Immortality as an Agent: The General Phenomenon of Immortality and Individual Immortality

The passage we analyse next, 6:17-20, consists of a chain of conclusions that describe the way from the desire for instruction to immortality:

ἀρχὴ γὰρ αὐτῆς  
 ἢ ἀληθεστάτη παιδείας ἐπιθυμία  
 φροντὶς δὲ παιδείας  
 ἀγάπη  
 ἀγάπη δὲ  
 τήρησις νόμων αὐτῆς

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<sup>716</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 173.

προσοχή δὲ νόμων  
 βεβαίως ἀφθαρσίας  
 ἀφθαρσία δὲ ἐγγὺς εἶναι ποιῇ θεοῦ  
 ἐπιθυμία ἄρα σοφίας ἀνάγει ἐπὶ βασιλείαν<sup>717</sup>

These verses comprise “a dense concentration of terms employed in the previous units.”<sup>718</sup> Thus ἀγάπη links to 1:1; 3:9; 4:10; 6:12 (also 8:2<sup>719</sup>), ἀφθαρσία to 2:23, βασιλείαν to 3:18; 5:16 and is contrasted with 1:14.<sup>720</sup> We can perceive many aspects of the concept of immortality here; they are a kind of summary of what the concept covers. The verses highlight that immortality is only available through wisdom. They emphasize the importance of love. We can see that the new identity of the righteous who received wisdom has to be seen in behaviour and actions as well (by keeping the laws). Immortality is viewed again as presence with God. And finally, we can observe the regality metaphor. This section focuses on one conclusion alone<sup>721</sup> that constitutes one of the most interesting metaphors to analyse: ἀφθαρσία δὲ ἐγγὺς εἶναι ποιῇ θεοῦ.

What we immediately note is that immortality is personified;<sup>722</sup> it is perceived as an agent<sup>723</sup> that causes one to exist close to God. It has been emphasized that presence with God means life; thus what we read here is in fact that immortality makes one live forever. The personification of immortality can be understood via the generic metaphor EVENTS ARE ACTIONS; we conceptualize immortality as an action of an agent.<sup>724</sup> Immortality can be seen as an event because an entity reaches a state of everlasting existence. Thus immortality can be perceived as an action of an agent: there is an entity (immortality) that makes you be with God. This schema also has a causal

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<sup>717</sup> The beginning of wisdom is the most sincere desire for instruction, and concern for instruction is love of her, and love of her is the keeping of her laws, and giving heed to her laws is assurance of immortality, and immortality brings one near to God; so the desire for wisdom leads to a kingdom.

<sup>718</sup> Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 60.

<sup>719</sup> For this latter, see Amir, “The Figure of Death,” 155 n. 2.

<sup>720</sup> Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 60.

<sup>721</sup> See the other conclusions below.

<sup>722</sup> Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 35: by personifying one object or abstract entity, we understand them better, since we use “one of the best source domains we have—ourselves” to refer to them.

<sup>723</sup> “ποιέω,” L&N, ad loc.: ποιέω is “a marker of an agent relation with a numerable event.”

<sup>724</sup> Note that we explain the concept of immortality on the basis of the insights of Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 78, applied there to the concept of death.

structure.<sup>725</sup> proximity with God is perceived as the result of immortality. Thus the metaphor expresses that immortality is the condition of being with God,<sup>726</sup> it is a quality that makes the relationship with God and life in his realm possible. Immortality is not a natural endowment of man, but a gift of God (7:1, 9:5, 14; 15:8-11, 16-17; 16:14).<sup>727</sup> Only if he shares in the quality of the life of God,<sup>728</sup> can man be near to God. Here again we can perceive the close link between immortality and relationship with God, but we can also perceive the stress Wis lays on the communion with God.<sup>729</sup> Since the relationship with God appears to be the result of immortality, it appears that the ultimate goal in one's life is being near to God. But being near to God is equal to immortality;<sup>730</sup> so at the end the text seems to say that immortality leads to immortality. We have now reached the final point of our analysis that we can formulate in this way: the righteous can live forever because a general phenomenon of immortality exists. The metaphor IMMORTALITY AS AN AGENT views this general phenomenon of immortality as the cause of individual immortality; therefore it can be personified as an agent that brings people to life with God, e.g. to immortality.<sup>731</sup> The causal link between the agent and action corresponds to the general phenomenon (immortality) that causes individual immortality.

The personification of death in 1:16 and 2:24 provides a chance to compare the concept of immortality and the concept of death in terms of relationship with God. The concept of immortality personified in 6:19 emphasizes the idea that "immortality brings one near to God." If we parallel it with the concept of death that is also personified as an agent with whom the wicked

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<sup>725</sup> Cf. Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 78.

<sup>726</sup> Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 105: "The thought . . . is familiar to us from Greek philosophy, but here it occurs for the first time among Jewish writers."

<sup>727</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 66.

<sup>728</sup> For immortality as the quality of the life of God, see the section on the realm of God.

<sup>729</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 62: "the Sage does not look upon immortality as a metaphysical entity. For him it is not the inherent indestructibility of the soul, as Platonic tradition conceived it, but rather a state of eternal, blessed communion with God and his saints." See also Frank Chamberlin Porter, "The Pre-existence of the Soul in the Book of Wisdom and in the Rabbinical Writings," *AmJT* 12 (1908): 85; Heinisch, *Theology of the Old Testament*, 262; Weisengoff, "Death and Immortality," 104-105, 110, 126.

<sup>730</sup> See the metaphors that will be discussed below.

<sup>731</sup> Though many of these metaphors seem to be consciously developed or selected by the author (of course, culturally coherent), this idea of immortality might be generated by Wis' cultural context (the belief in afterlife). This, however, does not make this metaphor less significant. As Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 3-6, say, metaphors are often unconsciously used, but they are equally important since they betray the author's and the audience's way of thinking, the way they conceive of the world.

make covenant (1:16; see also 2:24), we can see the essence of the two antithetical concepts of Wis: while death gains the meaning of loss of communion with God and loss of life, immortality acquires the connotation of presence with God and having life. The EVENTS ARE ACTIONS metaphor in 6:19 is combined with LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE which is extended by the metaphor of communion with God—being near to God—, thus presenting immortality as the agent that makes one be present in the realm of God. Here we can recognize the two aspects of immortality: immortality is the cause (and, therefore, also condition) of the relationship with God, but it is also the quality of it since being present in the realm of God means eternal life.

## 2.2.4 Immortality in Terms of Being in the Hand of God

δικαίων δὲ ψυχὰι ἐν χειρὶ θεοῦ  
καὶ οὐ μὴ ἄψηται αὐτῶν βάσανος<sup>732</sup> (3:1).

The context of the text projects the physical death of the righteous; the wicked planned his persecution and death in 2:12-20. Thus in 3:1 the fate of the righteous after physical death is described. The author's reply to the wicked already commences in 2:21 by ταῦτα ἐλογίσαντο καὶ ἐπλανήθησαν.<sup>733</sup> Then he goes on with ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ἔκτισεν τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐπ' ἀφθαρσίᾳ καὶ εἰκόνα τῆς ἰδίας αἰδιότητος ἐποίησεν αὐτόν (2:23)<sup>734</sup> and δικαίων δὲ ψυχὰι ἐν χειρὶ θεοῦ καὶ οὐ μὴ ἄψηται αὐτῶν βάσανος<sup>735</sup> (3:1). He connects the righteous' state after death<sup>736</sup> to creation. This is one of the reasons why the state of the righteous in 3:1-9 can be a metaphor for immortality; the link shows how God's purposed immortality comes into realization, how a person reaches the final state of immortality through physical death. Since the righteous are already in connection with God on earth as the children of God (2:13, 16, 18), therefore, we can say that they are already in the hand of God.<sup>737</sup> We can perceive the two levels of existence here

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<sup>732</sup> But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them.

<sup>733</sup> Thus they reasoned, but they were led astray.

<sup>734</sup> For God created us for incorruption, and made us in the image of his own eternity.

<sup>735</sup> But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them.

<sup>736</sup> Since in 2:12-20 the wicked projected the righteous' physical death, we can assume that 3:1ff refers to the state after death. See also Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 81-85; Gilbert, "The Origins," 173. Whether this is an intermediate state or a final state, is not in our focus; for this see Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life*, 89; Puech, "The Book of Wisdom," 128.

<sup>737</sup> Taylor, "The Eschatological Meaning of Life and Death," 129-130.

that overlap in the case of the righteous. He is present both in the earthly realm and in the realm of God. But the immediate context here is the righteous' projected death (2:12-20); thus ἐν χειρὶ θεοῦ must imply that the righteous' souls are in God's hand not only before, but even during and after death.

Δικαίων δὲ ψυχαὶ ἐν χειρὶ θεοῦ combines LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE with the hand of God metaphor, and as a result, immortality is viewed as presence in the hand of God. This latter metaphor uses the Great Chain Metaphor to conceptualize God's power in terms of human body. In ἐν χειρὶ θεοῦ we can see both the source domain (human body) and the target domain (power of God).<sup>738</sup> The source concept, hand, has functional behavior that is: it carries out different physical activities such as touching, grasping. It can carry out other activities as well such as fighting, holding, and protecting. Thus the function of human hand is diverse. Moreover, it is controlled by reason. It expresses will and power: the same hand which gives can take away, and the hand which keeps can also release or drop. Therefore the use of hand as source concept for the power of God can easily arise from everyday experience.

The mapping of the source domain into the target domain can be described in the following way:

Source: human hand is	Target: God's power can be seen in
to express physical power	ruling
to keep something	saving and protecting
to throw, drop or give away	judging and punishing

The hand of God metaphor is well-known from the OT texts where it refers to God's power to give life and protect, to judge and punish. God's power can be seen in creation (11:17; 13:10), in his rule over the cosmos (7:16; 10:20), in the protection and redemption of the righteous (3:1;

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<sup>738</sup> The metaphor can also be structured as AN ABSTRACT COMPLEX SYSTEM IS THE HUMAN BODY; see Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 129, who suggests that the categories of the "extended Great Chain" (for this see Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 128) are viewed as "abstract complex systems [that] involve human beings and their ideas, as well as a variety of other abstract and concrete entities and particular relationships among them."

5:16; 10:20; 14:6; 19:8),<sup>739</sup> and the punishment of the wicked (10:19-20; 16:15).<sup>740</sup> These properties are very well illustrated in 5:15-16 where we can see the righteous covered by God's arm and receiving crown and power. The righteous will live forever, and he receives kingship because the almighty God protects him with his right hand.

LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE is combined with the hand of God metaphor; this leads to a structure that perceives the state of the believers as presence in the hand of God. As a consequence, all the properties that belong to the the hand of God metaphor are also the properties of this state, and the righteous shares life, protection, and power to judge and punish. We have said that there is a functional unity between wisdom and the righteous. We can see this functional relationship again in *being in the hand of God*. The metaphor accordingly does not only mean that those who are in the hand of God are protected,<sup>741</sup> but they also share other qualities of communion with God, they become kings and judges.

Since we discuss the kingship of the righteous elsewhere, we focus on the aspect of protection here. What happens in 3:1 is exactly what the wicked mock the righteous with in 2:18: God delivers the righteous from the hand of the wicked. The hand of the wicked (2:18) expresses the hostile power<sup>742</sup> that stands opposite to God and the righteous. In fact God delivered the righteous long time ago (2:13, 16, 18), not in the moment of death; the wicked are throughout wrong because although they think that the righteous is in their hand, the hand of the adversaries (ἐκ χειρὸς ἀνθεστηκότων—2:18), the righteous is, in fact, in God's hand (ἐν χειρὶ θεοῦ). That the righteous were all the time in God's hand shows that *being in the hand of God* does not only refer to an intermediate state after physical death, but it is a permanent state of the righteous, a

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<sup>739</sup> McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 98: anthropomorphism has to be first of all seen in the context of "the exercise of divine power" and "the giving of divine gifts, both of which imply a continuous, active presence rather than the sudden arrival of epiphany." Cf., for example, 1:10; 7:11; 11:17.

<sup>740</sup> See "χείρ," *BDAG*, ad loc.; Kenneth D. Mulzac, "Hand," *EDB*, 548. McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 31-32: the *hand of God* is probably synonymous with wisdom, deduced from the parallel between 14:6 and 10:4. This would give more strength to the metaphor that views immortality as being in the hand of God, since immortality is the quality of the communion with wisdom (1:1, 15; 6:17-21; 7:14, 27, etc.).

<sup>741</sup> See Armin Schmitt, *Weisheit*, NEB.AT 23 (Würzburg: Echter, 1989), 26, who also parallels Wis 3:1 with Luke 1:66; John 10:29 and Acts 11:21.

<sup>742</sup> See this meaning of χείρ in "χείρ," *BDAG*, ad loc.

metaphor for immortality that starts on earth.<sup>743</sup> Nevertheless, the context emphasizes that death cannot touch the righteous' life either. But what kind of death is implied here? As we have said above, mortality belongs to the nature of human beings, but regarded in faith, it becomes a threshold between earthly life and life in the Kingdom of God (5:15). In this sense physical death does not affect the future of the righteous since their life continues unbroken through death. Thus, I would say that although the context is the physical death of the righteous, οὐ μὴ ᾗσεται αὐτῶν βάσανος actually refers to the death that will only be the share of the wicked:<sup>744</sup> physical death as punishment and ultimate death (see 4:19). The wicked are wrong not only in forecasting the righteous' future, but in defining death as well. What they consider as the *end* for the righteous turns out to be only physical death, part of human condition. For God gives immortality for the righteous, but for the wicked physical death, indeed, becomes the absolute end.

Another question is what exactly ψυχὰι means here?<sup>745</sup> From the context of the persecution scene, it is clear that ψυχὰι is something that does not die. It is also clear that it is something that

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<sup>743</sup> Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 40, emphasizes that eternal life is not limited to the afterlife in Wis, but the righteous continue the life they started on earth; this life, however, will be fulfilled in the afterlife. Weisengoff, "Death and Immortality," 130, argues for the double meaning of 3:4, which refers to the persecuted and exalted just but also "can be taken as a present general condition" of all those suffering for righteousness. We shall argue that if, therefore, 3:4 has present reference as well, then the whole passage could also have this implication.

<sup>744</sup> See Wright, "Wisdom," 560; Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 71.

<sup>745</sup> The scholarly opinion is divided on this topic. In Winston's opinion the souls of the righteous survive death and "enjoy a blissful immortality" (*The Wisdom of Solomon*, 125). Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life*, 88: "Regardless of what happens to the bodies of the righteous, their *souls* are in God's hand . . . here judgment after death does not require a resurrection of the body because, in spite of the destruction of the body, the soul continues to exist and can be judged." Collins, "Apocalyptic Eschatology in Philosophical Dress," 99, also has similar opinion. According to Clarke, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 29, ψυχὰι refers to the total person, although in his opinion immortality in Wis does not mean "living on after death in some undefined way, as through being immortal because justice and wisdom are timeless" (30). Gilbert, "The Origins," 173, is clearer: the immortality of the righteous "is attached to their soul." Gilbert, "The Origins," 173, however, raises the possibility that "we can question whether the author of Wis did not intend to insinuate . . . the corporeal resurrection." Puech, "The Book of Wisdom," 128 n. 46: δικαίων ψυχὰι simply means "the just." See also Schmitt, *Weisheit*, 26. Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 45-46, 45 n. 2, translates it *life* in arguing that it is the spiritual life of the righteous, which started on earth that continues; he concludes that the text does not speak of bodily immortality but leaves the question open. Entering a discussion about resurrection is not in our purpose; therefore, we would conclude with noting that ψυχὰι probably refers to a person's whole life in its totality, with or without a nuance of corporality.

is not visible to and cannot be experienced by the wicked (in the eyes of the unrighteous they seem to die).

The anthropology of Wis was influenced by both Hellenistic and Jewish vision on man; its conception of man seems to be a combination of ideas.<sup>746</sup> The author uses the terms of Hellenistic philosophy and he also incorporates many of its insights into his anthropology.<sup>747</sup> Man is referred to as soul (πνεῦμα), body (σῶμα) and reason (λόγος) in 2:2-3.<sup>748</sup> The soul is also designated by two terms at least: πνεῦμα and ψυχή.<sup>749</sup> But the question is to what extent do these terms incorporate Hellenistic ideas and to what extent are they Jewish understanding of man.

Ψυχή sometimes seems to include the Hellenistic understanding of soul, which is differentiated from or even contrasted with the body (1:4; 8:19; 9:15; 15:8; 16:14).<sup>750</sup> At other times ψυχή

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<sup>746</sup> See John J. Collins, "Apocalyptic Eschatology as the Transcendence of Death," in Collins, *Seers, Sybils and Sages*, 92-93. While, among others, Carl Ludwig Willibald Grimm, *Das Buch der Weisheit*, vol. 6 of *Kurzgefasstes exegetisches Handbuch zu den Apokryphen des Alten Testaments*, ed. Otto Fridolin Fritzsche (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1860), 19; Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 29-30; Collins, "The Root of Immortality," 362-363; Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 71-87, and Segal, *Life after Death*, 385-386, emphasize the dominance of Hellenistic influence, Porter, "The Pre-existence of the Soul"; Puech, "The Book of Wisdom," 127-138; Pierre Grelot, "L'eschatologie de la Sagesse et les apocalypses juives," in *À la rencontre de Dieu: Mémorial Albert Gelin*, ed. André Barucq et al., BFCTL 8 (Le Puy: Mappus, 1961), 165-178; Larcher, *Études*, 277; Beauchamp, "Le salut," 491-526; Wright, *The Resurrection*, 162-175; Sanders, "Wisdom, Theodicy, Death," 274, argue for an anthropology and eschatology influenced by the Jewish thought. The anthropology doesn't seem to be a fixed system; it seems that the author combines ideas without being embarrassed by inconsistency or controversy. There are also questions he doesn't raise; e.g. what happens to body in death? These questions were probably not the most important for him; the essence of his theology is that the mortal man becomes immortal in his relation with God and his wisdom.

<sup>747</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 87, also 71-87. Reese notes that the author's "anthropology is best described as a working combination of three factors: the discoveries of Greek medicine, the influence of hellenistic religious philosophy as it interpreted Plato's late moralizing writings, and the principles of Aristotelian psychology" (*Hellenistic Influence*, 81-82). Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 83, also mentions that in the Hebrew idea of man, nefesh was not considered "capable of maintaining a satisfying existence apart from a fleshy body. Hence when Ps-Solomon deliberately accentuates the distinct roles of soul and body in 8.19, he is not speaking in terms of Hebrew anthropology." On the contrary, Xavier Léon-Dufour, "Soul", *DBT*, 567: "If there is a distinction between the body and the soul, it is not such to envisage a true existence for the separated soul."

<sup>748</sup> Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 117: in σπινθήρ (2:2) we can find the Stoic conception of ἡγεμονικόν "or ruling part of the soul as a fiery intelligent breath."

<sup>749</sup> For the other designations, see Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 29, who says that δόλος and ἐπιθυμία in 4:11, 12 may reflect the Middle Platonist idea of irrational soul, while ψυχή and νοῦς the rational soul, but it could also be that they designate one of the elements or faculties of the soul according to the Stoic division.

<sup>750</sup> See Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 81-83; Segal, *Life after Death*, 231; Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 25-32, 198.



seems to refer to *soul* or *person* in line with OT anthropology.<sup>751</sup> Man becomes a *living soul* after God breathed His πνεῦμα<sup>752</sup> (spirit) into him (15:11, 16; cf. Gen 2:7).<sup>753</sup> Ψυχή in this case means something which is inseparable from the body. Πνεῦμα in 15:11 may be distinguished from the ψυχή or *nefesh*.<sup>754</sup>

1:4; 8:19-20; 9:15 (also 11:17) are mostly cited as verses supporting anthropological dualism.<sup>755</sup> However, the chiasm in 1:4 emphasizes that body and soul are equal; they are not contrasted,<sup>756</sup> since wickedness can separate both soul and body from wisdom:<sup>757</sup>

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<sup>751</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 83: Hebrew writers viewed the whole man as a unity. The soul denotes the entire man. Thus, ψυχή could have a meaning similar to that of *bśr* or *nefesh* that denotes a living soul or a person/personality, or a person's whole life; but in any case, the soul that is inseparable from the body. See Léon-Dufour, *DBT*, 566-567; Segal, *Life after Death*, 142-144; James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), 12; Michael Bailly, "Biblical Man and Some Formulae of Christian Teaching," *ITQ* 27 (1960): 177-178. Cf. Roland E. Murphy, "*Bśr* in the Qumrān Literature and *Sarks* in the Epistle to the Romans," *SP* 2 (1959): 60-68.

<sup>752</sup> Bennema, *The Power of Saving Wisdom*, 68-69, distinguishes between two related concepts of πνεῦμα: πνεῦμα possessed by all human beings ensures life and reasoning, but salvific knowledge only comes through the πνεῦμα of wisdom. For the distinction between the two concepts, see also W. Bieder, "Pneúma," *TDNT*, 881-882; Marie E. Isaacs, *The Concept of Spirit: A Study of Pneuma in Hellenistic Judaism and its Bearing on the New Testament*, HeyM 1 (London: Heythrop College, 1976), 46.

<sup>753</sup> Taylor, "The Eschatological Meaning of Life and Death," 100: πνεῦμα (2:3-4; 15:16; 16:14; etc.) is mostly understood in Hebrew sense apart from 7:23, 20.

<sup>754</sup> Léon-Dufour, *DBT*, 567: the spirit returns to Yahweh in Job 34:14f; Ps 31:6; Qoh 12:7. In 15:11 (also 15:8) the meaning of πνεῦμα and ψυχή seems to originate from Gen 2:7, though the formulation is Greek; see Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 287; Maurice Gilbert, *La critique des dieux dans le Livre de la Sagesse (Sg 13-15)*, AnBib 53 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1973), 213; Taylor, "The Eschatological Meaning of Life and Death," 90-91, 99-100; Wright, "Wisdom," 559 (who says that *soul* and *spirit* are "used interchangeably"); Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 32.

<sup>755</sup> See Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 26, 198; Blenkinsopp, *Wisdom and Law*, 148; Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 30-34.

<sup>756</sup> Larcher, *Études*, 268, observes that in 4:11-12 among the dangers that can pervert the just only external evils are mentioned, but the body as a source of sin is not mentioned.

<sup>757</sup> See Heinisch, *Theology of the Old Testament*, 164; Porter, "The Pre-existence of the Soul," 64; Taylor, "The Eschatological Meaning of Life and Death," 87; Clarke, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 17; also Wright, "Wisdom," 559. Although Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 84: the comparison of 1:4 with 15:4 shows that "the Sage looks on man's soul as the director of his moral life." He also notes that 15:8 "clearly contrasts body and soul" (*Hellenistic Influence*, 84). However, Reese still believes that "this does not mean that he [the author] rejects the biblical insistence on the unity of the human being in his moral and emotional activity . . . [he] incorporated the fruit of their research [Greek philosophical investigations] into his own understanding of the relationship between soul and body. He was thus able to identify man's psychological personality with his soul as his superior and determining element, and still attribute a role to the body in man's moral activity" (*Hellenistic Influence*, 84).

ὅτι

εἰς κακότεχνον ψυχὴν  
οὐκ εἰσελεύσεται  
σοφία  
οὐδὲ κατοικήσει  
ἐν σώματι κατάχρεω ἁμαρτίας<sup>758</sup>

Both 8:19-20 and 9:15 have to be analysed in view of their context. If we look closely at 8:21, it becomes clear that 8:19-20 does not refer to the pre-existence of soul, it only expresses that even a naturally good soul and body needs the help of wisdom to be disciplined and live with God, but the author expresses this by using the categories of Hellenistic philosophy.<sup>759</sup> “The Sage’s preoccupation with anthropology is related to his interest in the final destiny of man’s ‘soul.’”<sup>760</sup> Similarly, from the context it becomes clear that 9:15 does not refer to anthropological dualism, but it only explains why the human are incapable of discerning the truth of God.<sup>761</sup> For being

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<sup>758</sup> Because wisdom will not enter an evil soul or dwell in a sinful body [own trans.].

<sup>759</sup> Porter, “The Pre-existence of the Soul,” 53-115, esp. 64-76; Heinisch, *Theology of the Old Testament*, 158, already argue against direct dependence on Plato in these passages.

<sup>760</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 134. He explains that “Ps-Solomon is interested in arriving at a clearer understanding of the psychological and moral implications of the body-soul relationship for man during this earthly existence. He does not turn to abstract speculation about the origin and nature of the soul, which he accepts as being breathed into men by God, the personal creator. His primary concern is practical” (*Hellenistic Influence*, 82). Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 80, also notes that 8:19-20 “must be seen as balancing the earlier description of Ps-Solomon’s birth (7.1-6),” just as 9:15, i.e. the author explains that human qualities alone, even the best ones, do not lead to wisdom (82). C. D. Elledge, *Life after Death in Early Judaism: The Evidence of Josephus*, WUNT 2/208 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 28: “it is quite possible that the author’s anthropology has been influenced by popular Platonic notions. Nevertheless, the author has kept this influence rather to a bare minimum. He does not call explicit attention to these ideas in themselves, but employs them as they yield themselves to his description of the ways of wisdom and the defense of theodicy.” If we analyse 8:19-20 carefully, we can see that even if v. 20 seems to say that the soul preceded the body, in the previous verse we find another arrangement: here it appears that Solomon had a body first, and then he received a soul—v. 20 inverts this formulation. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 84-85, notes with regards the inversion that “Ps-Solomon is employing the literary figure of *paraleipsis* or *praetermissio*. By reversing his first expression, he shows that the soul, rather than the body, is the fundamental element of the human personality and dynamic factor in its moral dignity.” Even Collins, “The Mysteries of God,” 294, admits: “The vacillation between two formulations in Wisdom [8:19-20], however, shows that pre-existence was not important for the author’s anthropology.”

<sup>761</sup> Taylor, “The Eschatological Meaning of Life and Death,” 92-95.

human (with a perishable body) also means that we are incapable to reach God unless we live with his wisdom.<sup>762</sup>

Thus as we have seen the Greek philosophical terms used by the author in reference to man may include different meanings: at times we can see a picture of man in the context of Platonic mentality, at other times the unity of soul and body is preserved according to the Hebrew thought. What we can conclude is that the author differentiates between body (σῶμα) and soul (πνεῦμα/ψυχή). But notwithstanding this differentiation, body and soul seems to belong together and they preserve their unity.<sup>763</sup> There seems to be no anthropological dualism in Wis and no pre-existence of the soul. The author uses the terms of Hellenistic philosophy but approaching it to the OT understanding of man.

If we accept that besides using the Greek terms the author was rather following the main line OT anthropology,<sup>764</sup> it is more probable that the author referred to the whole person here.<sup>765</sup> Moreover, if the idea is that the ψυχαὶ of the righteous are already in the hand of God on earth, this strengthens the assumption that ψυχαὶ here has the meaning of a total person, or rather, to a person's life in its totality.<sup>766</sup> The wicked do not see that the life of the righteous is saved because life for them means earthly life;<sup>767</sup> they do not see the other aspect of human life that is

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<sup>762</sup> See Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 86-87. Most of the scholars today do not speak of the pre-existence, but pre-eminence of the soul over body in Wis; see Clarke, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 61; Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 84-85; Larcher, *Études*, 274; Puech, "The Book of Wisdom," 131; Collins, "Apocalyptic Eschatology in Philosophical Dress," 99; Porter, "The Pre-existence of the Soul." Hogan, "The Exegetical Background of the 'Ambiguity of Death,'" 17, however, notes that the author "is not consistent in identifying the self exclusively with the spiritual part of the person"; Hogan mentions 4:1 and 8:19 as examples where the author first identifies it with the body.

<sup>763</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 82: "the Sage does not consider body and soul as two independent substances," although he distinguishes between their roles.

<sup>764</sup> Taylor, "The Eschatological Meaning of Life and Death," 97.

<sup>765</sup> However, according to Collins, "The Root of Immortality," 363, "while the conception of the soul is not consistently Platonic it at least refers to a spiritual dimension of the person. The doctrine of immortality centers on the existence of this spiritual dimension, not on any supposed resurrection." On the contrary, Puech, "The Book of Wisdom," 131, warns against a purely philosophical reading of these passages: the philosophical terminology of 9:15 "inserted in a totally different context, helps to understand that the author expects the saved soul of the just to receive a body which is in harmony with it, in other words an incorruptible, immortal, glorious body, to live in the company of saints." It is formulated likewise by Beauchamp, "Le salut," 495.

<sup>766</sup> See Puech, "The Book of Wisdom," 128.

<sup>767</sup> See the distinction we made above at the anthropology.

immortality. Accordingly, the moment of death in 4:10, 11, 14 can be imagined as God's lifting up his hand with the righteous, who was already in his hand since receiving wisdom. *Being in the hand of God*, thus, refers to a permanent state that protects one from ultimate death, and assures the continuation of life; thus, it is a metaphor for immortality.

But protection was only one property of the hand of God concept. 3:7-8 says that the righteous who did not die (3:1ff) will be exalted as a king over the nations forever; immortality is linked to power to rule. In 4:16-18a; 5:1ff we can see the righteous as the judge of the wicked. Those who have life will not be judged, but they will be judges.<sup>768</sup> 5:1-16 very clearly connects immortality and judging role: the righteous who was murdered by the wicked now stands "with great confidence" as the judge. Thus we can see that the other elements of the source domain hand of God are also mapped into the concept of immortality.

### 2.2.5 Immortality as Love-Relationship

We have seen the love of God for the creation described in 11:24-26: the Creator God loves all that he created; therefore he wants to save all. The love of God implies God's kindness and mercy towards humankind, and it also includes the saving will of the Creator God. The Creator also loves wisdom; we can observe in 8:3 that the metaphor LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE is extended by the metaphors of union with God and love. Since wisdom is the mediator between man and God, man has to love wisdom in order to relate to God and receive immortality (1:1, 5; 6:12; 7:10; 8:2).<sup>769</sup>

Ἀγαπήσατε δικαιοσύνην<sup>770</sup> (1:1a).

δικαιοσύνη γὰρ ἀθάνατός ἐστιν<sup>771</sup> (1:15).<sup>772</sup>

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<sup>768</sup> See below at the discussion on the righteous' kingship.

<sup>769</sup> This again goes back to the idea of mercy and justice we have discussed above. We do not wish to repeat those points again; we are here concerned with love as a metaphor for immortality.

<sup>770</sup> Love righteousness.

<sup>771</sup> For righteousness is immortal.

<sup>772</sup> Stählin, *TDNT*, 1262: ἀγαπάω has a meaning similar to that of φιλέω, but φιλέω "has more of the sense of 'to love' in distinction from 'to like,' although the verbs are often interchangeable."

This idea is probably the strongest call for loving righteousness,<sup>773</sup> and by paralleling 6:21, it creates an inclusion that forms the framework of the first six chapters. The monostich in 1:15 captures the attention. This single clause provides a break in thought between 1:14 and 1:16. This break shows that 1:15 is not linked with either of them but it is linked with another verse and it also emphasizes its importance.<sup>774</sup> 1:15 is linked with 1:1a, providing the reason for the first call: love righteousness, for righteousness is immortal.<sup>775</sup> 1:1cd explains how to love righteousness:

φρονήσατε περὶ τοῦ κυρίου  
 ἐν ἀγαθότητι  
 καὶ  
 ἐν ἀπλότητι καρδίας  
 ζητήσατε αὐτόν<sup>776</sup>

Loving righteousness and seeking God are connected, but so are thinking of God and seeking him as the chiasm in 1:1cd shows.<sup>777</sup> However, “true seeking after God . . . does not originate in man’s personal resources, but is rather an ‘association’ with Wisdom (8.18).”<sup>778</sup> 1:2b shows that in fact the action starts from God; it is God who takes a step towards people. He lets himself be found (εὐρίσκεται) and makes himself known (ἐμφανίζεται), reveals himself to those who do not distrust him (cf. 6:12-13).<sup>779</sup>

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<sup>773</sup> Clarke, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 13: Wis develops here the idea of Prov 1:7 (the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge). Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 50, notes similarity with Ps 45:8.

<sup>774</sup> See Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 38-39; Raurell, “From ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗ to ΑΘΑΝΑΣΙΑ,” 337. We do not deal with the question of the authenticity of 1:15; for that see Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 37-39.

<sup>775</sup> See Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 34; Raurell, “From ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗ to ΑΘΑΝΑΣΙΑ,” 347-349.

<sup>776</sup> Think of the Lord in goodness and seek him with sincerity of heart.

<sup>777</sup> See also 15:3a; Cf. Isa 51:1; Zeph 2:3. The phrase can be contrasted with 14:30 where those who think about God wrongly, are condemned. According to Amir, “The Figure of Death,” 155, it is a “phrase unparalleled in the whole of the Hebrew Bible but amply paralleled by the philosophical tradition.” McGlynn and Skehan find similarities in certain passages of the Old Testament. For the similarity between I Chr 29:17 and Wis 1:1, see McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 60; for similarity with Ps 2 and 44(45), see Patrick William Skehan, “Borrowings from the Psalms in the Book of Wisdom,” *CBQ* 10 (1948): 384.

<sup>778</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 44; see also 132-133.

<sup>779</sup> See Raurell, “From ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗ to ΑΘΑΝΑΣΙΑ,” 341. Vignolo, “Wisdom, Prayer and Kingly Pattern,” 266, commenting on 9:1-2ff says: “If this Solomonic prayer (and any prayer as a whole) has in itself a powerful drive to surpass oneself . . . all this happens—biblically (but not only) speaking—only because a prayer is

Righteousness is used to describe both the actions of God and that of man in Hebrew. Moreover, as a category, it describes both “right relationship with God” and the behaviour that results from that relationship.<sup>780</sup> These aspects are found here. Since the thought in 1:1a is paralleled in 1cd, it suggests that righteousness is God—and since God is righteous, he will act in a righteous way (5:15-23). At the same time, righteousness also refers to man’s attitude and actions that is thinking and acting in harmony with God, and showing this in his relation with his fellowmen (chaps. 7-9)<sup>781</sup> on the basis of his identity as the child of God (2:13, 15-16, 18). Οὐθὲν γὰρ ἀγαπᾷ ὁ θεὸς εἰ μὴ τὸν σοφίᾳ συνοικοῦντα<sup>782</sup> (7:28) expresses the mutuality of this relationship. These ideas together disclose the dynamic of love-relation between God and man: those who love righteousness will be loved by God. And those who possess God’s love receive immortality, or, to formulate it differently, to be in a love-relationship with God means immortality.<sup>783</sup> This is exactly what we see in Wis 4:10: εὐάρεστος θεῷ γενόμενος ἠγαπήθη καὶ ζῶν μεταξὺ ἀμαρτωλῶν μετέτεθη.<sup>784</sup> The righteous pleased God, and God loved him; therefore he was taken up to the realm of immortality (see also 3:5cd; 4:14). It could appear that God only loved the righteous because he pleased him, but having 11:24 in mind that states the unconditional love of God, we can understand that 4:10 emphasizes the reciprocity in the love-relation between God and the righteous. This also explains why the idea in 11:24 alone cannot stand as a metaphor for immortality: only a reciprocal love, a unity between the two parties, can be the foundation of a true relationship that results in immortality for the righteous. Thus we come again to the idea that immortality is a relational concept; it is the quality of the relationship between God and those who accept him. This special affection between God and the righteous is implied by the concept

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always and anywhere an answer to a former revelation. It is therefore in such a way that finiteness becomes ‘round’, made part of a personal and universal godly revelation according to which it gets a new meaning by itself, assuming, in this way, the unprecedented shape of spiritual dialogue in accordance with God’s free self-communication in the world.”

<sup>780</sup> Harrington, *Invitation to the Apocrypha*, 58.

<sup>781</sup> See Clarke, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 15; Harrington, *Invitation to the Apocrypha*, 58. Wisdom is both the revelation of God and the attitude of man to God and creation; see Roland E. Murphy, “Wisdom and Creation,” *JBL* 104 (1985): 3-11.

<sup>782</sup> For God loves nothing so much as the person who lives with wisdom.

<sup>783</sup> See also Ziener, “Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium,” 40, who understands love “das wesentliche Element des ‘Lebens,’” the essential element of life.

<sup>784</sup> There were some who pleased God and were loved by him, and while living among sinners were taken up.

of friendship that exposes the close unity of God and the righteous (7:14b, 27). Having discussed this metaphor above, we focus on the metaphor of love here.

Wis 3:9b again underlines this love-relationship between God and the righteous: καὶ οἱ πιστοὶ ἐν ἀγάπῃ προσμενοῦσιν αὐτῷ.<sup>785</sup> The text goes further: ὅτι χάρις καὶ ἔλεος τοῖς ἐκλεκτοῖς αὐτοῦ<sup>786</sup> (3:9c). Χάρις καὶ ἔλεος reflects the unconditional love of the God of the covenant.<sup>787</sup> Ἐν ἀγάπῃ conceives the state of love as a container in which the righteous remains. So here LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE is again extended by the metaphor of love perceiving immortality as presence in God's love. Προσμενοῦσιν αὐτῷ describes this love as a continuing relationship between God and the righteous; a permanent state of the children of God. Οἱ πιστοὶ makes the reciprocity of this love-relation explicit.<sup>788</sup>

One more remark before we finish this small section, in 6:17b-18a we can see that the love of wisdom is connected to concern for instruction and keeping the laws, thus, showing that communion with wisdom has ethical connotation as well. The ethical connotation is more elaborated in the metaphor of light.

## 2.2.6 Immortality as Peace and Rest

3:1-9 and 4:7 associate different states with immortality: the righteous is ἐν εἰρήνῃ (3:3b), ἐν ἀγάπῃ (3:9), ἐν ἀναπαύσει (4:7). These concepts appear as container metaphors; they are all linked with ἐν χειρὶ θεοῦ (3:1), and describe the concept of immortality qualitatively.

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<sup>785</sup> And the faithful will abide with him in love.

<sup>786</sup> Because grace and mercy are upon his elect. See also 4:15.

<sup>787</sup> See Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 85. Τοῖς ἐκλεκτοῖς αὐτοῦ may suggest a predestination as if God had elected previously those who will share immortality with him. But if we connect this idea with 1:14, we can see that God created all things for living. Similarly, if we take into account that the text says that God wants to spare all (11:20-26; 12:1-22), we can see that there is not predestination here, at least not in an unmitigated sense. However, those who invited death (1:16), got separated from God (1:3-11), but those who trust him will stay with him (3:9). From these it appears that God's elect are those who trust him.

<sup>788</sup> Taylor, "The Eschatological Meaning of Life and Death," 127-128, links οἱ πιστοὶ and ἐν ἀγάπῃ; thus the sentence is read "those who believe in love remain in him." Even this reading, however, preserves the idea that love is closely linked to the relationship between the righteous and God.

Οἱ δέ εἰσιν ἐν εἰρήνῃ (Wis 3:3b), the righteous are in peace.<sup>789</sup> LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE is combined with the concept of peace perceived as container. Consequently, the righteous is seen being at peace after death. The context of the sentence is the righteous' projected death (2:12-20). The first impression on the text shows that there is a crisis situation here. A second look, however, reveals something else: the apparent crisis of the righteous is actually a blessed state in the realm of God (3:2-4):<sup>790</sup>

ἔδοξαν ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς ἀφρόνων τεθνάναι  
καὶ ἐλογίσθη κάκωσις ἢ ἔξοδος αὐτῶν  
καὶ ἡ ἀφ' ἡμῶν πορεία σύντριμμα  
οἱ δέ εἰσιν ἐν εἰρήνῃ  
καὶ γὰρ ἐν ὄψει ἀνθρώπων ἐὰν κολασθῶσιν  
ἢ ἐλπίς αὐτῶν ἀθανασίας πλήρης  
καὶ ὀλίγα παιδευθέντες  
μεγάλα εὐεργετηθήσονται<sup>791</sup> (3:2-5b).

The author comments on the righteous' death; 2-3a, 4a, 5a reflects what the wicked thought of the righteous' death and 3b, 4b, 5b shows what their death in reality is. What happens to the righteous is actually the opposite of what the wicked believe: instead of τεθνάναι (dying), κάκωσις (disaster), σύντριμμα (destruction) and κολασθῶσιν (being punished), they are in εἰρήνῃ and ἡ ἐλπίς αὐτῶν ἀθανασίας πλήρης (their hope is full of immortality).

Another text with similar view on the state of the righteous is ἐν ἀναπαύσει (4:7), the righteous will be at rest. Ἀνάπαυσις means stopping, ceasing, rest.<sup>792</sup> 4:10-14 describes what happens with

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<sup>789</sup> Εἰρήνη means peace, inner rest, harmony, opposite of conflict, war, "a state of reconciliation with God"; see "εἰρήνη," ANLEX, ad loc.

<sup>790</sup> Thus from the author's point of view, physical death is not a crisis situation for the righteous who is in the hand of God (3:1). What could be called a crisis situation is the test of God (3:5) that leads either to life/peace or to death. The test of God does not only refer to the moment of death, but it also refers to the moment when one decides to live with wisdom or not. See the test of God also at the discussion on immortality in terms of up.

<sup>791</sup> In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be a disaster, and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace. For though in the sight of others they were punished, their hope is full of immortality. Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good.

<sup>792</sup> "ἀνάπαυσις," BDAG, ad loc.



the righteous in the moment of death: he is caught up by God; this is the reason why he is at rest. The context here, too, reflects on the lack of understanding of the wicked (4:14cd LXX).

Having seen the context of these texts, we can raise the question: do peace and rest define immortality or death? If these verses contrast ἐν εἰρήνῃ and ἐν ἀναπαύσει with the wicked's view on death as destruction (as it seems from 2:20-3:1 and the chiasm included in 3:2b-3a), then peace and rest could be related to death<sup>793</sup> and it defines death against destruction. If we accept this, then peace perceives this aspect of physical death, the departure to the final destination of immortality (just as it appears from 4:10, 11, 14). Despite all that, we propose that although the righteous' death is viewed as the saving act of God (the opposite of destruction); peace and rest qualify the state after death, or, perhaps, both. When peace and rest refer to the state after death, they must refer to immortality since Wis projects an afterlife.<sup>794</sup>

Let us go back to the false reasoning of the wicked that at the end leads to the death of the righteous (chap. 2). The wicked lament the inevitability of death. Life is short and meaningless. All the characteristics of personal life disappear with death.<sup>795</sup> This lamentation is the beginning of the reasoning of the wicked to which the author reflects in 2:21-3:9. Thus, what we read in 3:1ff, including the statement that the righteous is at peace, serves to refute the reasoning of the wicked. The wicked think that physical death ends human life. But they are wrong; the author says that the righteous are at peace. Human life does not end with physical death, but it continues unbroken through death. From this it follows that being at peace is not contrasted with physical death, but it is contrasted with a wrong view on life and mortality. Physical death is not destruction. Life goes on through physical death;<sup>796</sup> this is the aspect that is structured by *being*

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<sup>793</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 30: DEATH IS REST is a common metaphor for death; it appears in Job 3:17. The metaphor is coherent with many other metaphors "by virtue of commonplace knowledge," such as DEATH IS DARKNESS, DEATH IS COLD, DEATH IS SLEEP, etc. (Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 89).

<sup>794</sup> Weisengoff, "Death and Immortality," 129, notes that in the Greek as well as the LXX and NT thinking, *peace* has a positive sense; he also believes that peace in 3:3 "can mean only well-being in the after-life."

<sup>795</sup> See Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 40, 70-71.

<sup>796</sup> Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life*, 66: contrary to wisdom tales where "the rescue of the hero prevents his death," the righteous in Wis "is rescued after his death."

in peace. Immortality is not the opposite of physical death, but of destruction, of ultimate death.<sup>797</sup>

In the context of 3:1-9, we can see this metaphor more clearly. We have already discussed 3:1 that perceives the righteous' state after death as being in God's hand; this is not only a different state from what the wicked expect but a different dimension, too. Being in the hand of God does not only mean protection from suffering, but it means immortality. Peace should probably be viewed in connection to being in the hand of God. The righteous has risen to God's spiritual world where he experiences peace.<sup>798</sup> Thus, peace becomes the quality of the relationship with God. The verse is also paralleled with 3:4b and 3:5b; thus emphasizing that peace is linked to immortality.<sup>799</sup> Immortality is perceived as a substance in 3:4: ἡ ἐλπίς αὐτῶν ἀθανασίας πλήρης.<sup>800</sup> If we combine this with the state of peace, we can say that they are at peace because their state is filled with (the hope of) immortality. Ἐν εἰρήνῃ and ἀνάπαυσις, thus, can be source concepts that structure the concept of immortality.<sup>801</sup> 3:3b and 4:7 can be linked to 5:5 which

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<sup>797</sup> Of course, it can also refer to an intermediate state after death but that is also related to the righteous' exaltation. We do not intend to deal with this question.

<sup>798</sup> Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 32: "The just souls . . . are portrayed as being in the hand of God and perfectly at peace (either in some neutral zone in Hades, or more likely in Heaven)." Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 72: εἰρήνῃ may refer to tranquility, rest in death like in Isa 57:2 and Job 3:17 or it may refer to "the blessedness of the soul of the righteous under God's protection, as in Enoch 102.10." In view of the arguments mentioned above, we agree with this latter connotation. See also Pancratius C. Beentjes, "Wisdom of Solomon 3, 1-4, 19 and the Book of Isaiah," in *Studies in the Book of Isaiah: Festschrift Willem A. M. Beuken*, ed. J. van Ruiten and M. Vervenne, BETL 132 (Leuven: Leuven University Press; Leuven: Peeters, 1997), 419. Robert H. Charles, *Eschatology: The Doctrine of a Future Life in Israel, Judaism and Christianity: A Critical History*, 2nd ed., SB 49 (New York: Schocken Books, 1963), 310: "The life of the righteous and their future blessedness are set forth in terms remarkable at once for their beauty and vigour (iii. 1-4)."

<sup>799</sup> See Wright, *The Resurrection*, 164-167; Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 42, 82-84, who also emphasize that what happens here and 3:1-9 is the opposite of death.

<sup>800</sup> Cf. 3:4 with the hope of the ungodly in 3:11 and 5:14; the contrast affirms that the righteous' hope is full of immortality in contrast with the wicked's vain hope. Πλήρης can be joined with either ἐλπίς or ἀθανασίας. Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 72, prefers the latter. Also Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 64 n. 146: "The phrase . . . is better rendered, 'their hope was full of immortality,' [against 'their hope of immortality was full'] in keeping with the author's presenting God as maintaining the initiative in bringing men to this life; see Wis 5.14-15; 6.19." Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 105, following Reese (*Hellenistic Influence*, 62) in that immortality is not an inherent quality of man but it is the quality of man's relationship with God, also adds "Wis 3:4 seems to make this clear for it speaks of the hope of immortality and 'who hopes for what they already have?'" See also Murphy, *The Tree of Life*, 86; Weisengoff, "Death and Immortality," 129-130.

<sup>801</sup> 2 Clem. 5:5 links ἀνάπαυσις to the Kingdom of God and eternal life.

gives the connotation of a blessed state in the Kingdom of God to ἐν εἰρήνῃ and ἀνάπαυσις.<sup>802</sup> The author of Wis conceptualizes one aspect of immortality as LIFE IS PRESENCE AT PEACE/REST.

Another instance where rest is mentioned is 8:16, our final argument for linking rest with immortality: εἰσελτὼν εἰς τὸν οἶκόν μου προσαναπαύσομαι αὐτῇ οὐ γὰρ ἔχει πικρίαν ἢ συναναστροφή αὐτῆς οὐδὲ ὀδύνην ἢ συμβίωσις αὐτῆς ἀλλὰ εὐφροσύνην καὶ χαράν.<sup>803</sup> Life with wisdom is defined in terms of rest.<sup>804</sup> The verse also adds another nuance to the concept of rest: rest with wisdom means no pain, but inner calm, gladness and joy.<sup>805</sup> Thus while the metaphor *rest in death* arises from the experience that the body is “immobile, as if at rest,”<sup>806</sup> here inner rest is implied that is no fear but joy.

We have mentioned that peace and rest reflect a state where God’s saving power reveals itself. So being at peace/rest means that the righteous is protected from ultimate death. According to the prophets, peace will be the characteristic of the Messianic Kingdom (Isa 52:7).<sup>807</sup> Wis does not have messianic expectations, but here, too, peace is linked to the Kingdom of God where the righteous will be (3:1-9). The term also implies that the righteous, who was “at war” with evil and the wicked (2:12-20; 4:10-14) is now in peace because there are no enemies to fight with in the realm of God.<sup>808</sup> If we look back to 4:1-2, we see virtue marching gloriously for having conquered “the contest for prizes that are undefiled.”

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<sup>802</sup> Isa 57:15 LXX says about God that ἐν ἀγίοις ἀναπαυόμενος.

<sup>803</sup> When I enter my house, I shall find rest with her; for companionship with her has no bitterness, and life with her has no pain, but gladness and joy.

<sup>804</sup> In Prov 3:17 *wisdom’s way* is called the “the path of peace” and the next verse links peace to life.

<sup>805</sup> Cf. Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 195-196. Jub. 23:29-31 promises peace and joy to the just; it also says (23:31) that “and their bones shall rest in the earth, and their spirits shall have much joy.”

<sup>806</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 89.

<sup>807</sup> A thought also taken over by Christianity; see “εἰρήνη,” *BDAG*, ad loc.; Daniel L. Smith-Christopher, “Peace,” *EDB*, 1022.

<sup>808</sup> We find similar notion in the NT. See Smith-Christopher, *EDB*, 1021-1022. “εἰρήνη,” *BDAG*, ad loc.: εἰσιν ἐν εἰρήνῃ means that they are out of danger (Lk 11:21).

### 2.2.7 Immortality as Light

The passages in 17:20-18:1 and 7:29-30 compare moral good and evil in terms of light and darkness (see also 16:16-27(28-17:1); 17:2-18:4; 5:6-7).<sup>809</sup> “Heavy night” is stretched over the sinners while the righteous are in light. Similar metaphor we find in 5:6: καὶ τὸ τῆς δικαιοσύνης φῶς οὐκ ἐπέλαμψεν ἡμῖν καὶ ὁ ἥλιος οὐκ ἀνέτειλεν ἡμῖν.<sup>810</sup> The righteous, which walks on the path of God, has light, while the wicked is deprived of light. Those who receive wisdom, receive light, too, because light comes through wisdom (6:12; 7:26, 29-30).<sup>811</sup> Her light is self-kindled, αὐτόματος (17:6), which suggests its heavenly origin, but also its permanence.<sup>812</sup> God is eternal light (7:26) and wisdom is his reflection (6:12; 7:10, 25-26, 29-30). God manifests himself through wisdom to the righteous alone; ἐμφανίζεται in 1:2 also alludes to the imagery of light and “emphasizes the idea of illumination which is often present within the world of the divine δικαιοσύνη.”<sup>813</sup> Thus light becomes the quality of the communion with God, while darkness characterizes the separation from God.<sup>814</sup> We can say that light defines life, while darkness is a metaphor for death (5:6-13). The metaphorical structuring that describes this is LIFE IS LIGHT. Here we have to understand light non-metaphorically since it is the source concept for life; the aspects of light used in this metaphor would then be that light “promotes growth, that it makes us happy for the most part, that it allows us to see and gain the knowledge necessary for our survival.”<sup>815</sup> If life (eternal) is defined as an entity that promotes life, we have the same idea that we discussed with regards to 6:19: the general phenomenon of immortality promotes individual life. A small note before we go on, we have seen LIFE IS LIGHT structuring the limitedness of earthly life, but also perceiving revelation and the promotion of life. The source domain light is used in different metaphors, and it is related to life in many different ways because of its

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<sup>809</sup> See Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 185, for BAD IS BLACK. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 137: “The Sage links the light of the Exodus with the guiding light of the Law, which is the real ‘light of justice.’” See also McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 200-206.

<sup>810</sup> And the light of righteousness did not shine on us, and the sun did not rise upon us.

<sup>811</sup> Raurell, “From ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗ to ἈΘΑΝΑΣΙΑ,” 341 n. 29. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 141: “the gifts of God become light for men.”

<sup>812</sup> Αὐτόματος means that it exists on itself, without any cause; see “αὐτόματος,” *BDAG*, ad loc.; “αὐτόματος,” *L&N*, ad loc.

<sup>813</sup> Raurell, “From ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗ to ἈΘΑΝΑΣΙΑ,” 341.

<sup>814</sup> See Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 136-137. 17:1-18:4 stresses the isolation of the wicked in the darkness, which forecasts the final isolation from God.

<sup>815</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 58.

richness. It is always the context that tells us which properties of the source domain light is mapped onto the target.

Light also has ethical connotation here: wisdom teaches man how to live as the child of God (6:17; 7:13-21; 9:9, 18); she gives him knowledge. Being a child of God means a different way of living as a result of the new existence (2:12-16). In 18:4 the righteous is called the carrier of light; he has to teach others and mediate the light (6:22ff).<sup>816</sup>

The image of light comes to the fore in 3:7 where the righteous is the one who shines: καὶ ἐν καιρῷ ἐπισκοπῆς αὐτῶν ἀναλάμπουσιν καὶ ὡς σπινθήρες ἐν καλάμῃ διαδραμοῦνται.<sup>817</sup> As Winston puts it, “in contrast to their formerly passive though peaceful state, [the righteous] will be rendered eminently active.”<sup>818</sup> The metaphor of spark was used in chap. 2 to emphasize the transience of life in the false speech of the wicked (2:2c-3), and now the same metaphor is used by the author as a reply to the speech of the wicked showing that the righteous’ light will shine forth.<sup>819</sup> LIFE IS CONCEIVED HERE AS FIRE. We have said above that this metaphor is a specific case of the more general composite metaphor that views life as a cycle of the waxing and waning of light and heat and it includes both LIFE IS LIGHT and LIFE AS HEAT as well. The metaphor LIFE IS LIGHT views life as light and death as darkness, while LIFE IS HEAT views life as heat and death as coldness.<sup>820</sup> The image in 3:7 describes the righteous flaming and shining; thus the metaphor LIFE IS FIRE here refers to the immortality of the righteous.

### 2.2.8 Having Knowledge

Knowledge is defined by the terms γνῶσις (2:13; 6:22; 7:17; 10:10; 11:16; 14:22), σύνεσις (4:11; 9:5), ἐπιστήμη (7:16; 8:4) and φρόνησις (3:15; 4:9; 6:15; 7:7, 16; 8:6, 7, 18, 21; 17:7). Related to

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<sup>816</sup> For Israel’s role in teaching the other nations, see McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 186-189, 206-207; Larcher, *Le Livre*, 3:992.

<sup>817</sup> And in the time of their visitation they will shine forth, and will run like sparks through the stubble.

<sup>818</sup> Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 32. For the notion of resurrection in 3:7, see Larcher, *Le Livre*, 1:285; Gilbert, “The Origins,” 174; Puech, “The Book of Wisdom,” 130-131; Manfredi, “The Trial of the Righteous,” 175; Wright, *The Resurrection*, 167-172. Holmes, “*The Wisdom of Solomon*,” 529, connects it with the judgment: “‘run to and fro like sparks in the stubble’, i. e. to consume their enemies.” For a contrary opinion, see Collins, “The Root of Immortality,” 363; Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 68.

<sup>819</sup> See Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 86-87.

<sup>820</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 87-88.

knowledge, the author also uses the terms θεωρέω, seeing (13:5; 6:12).<sup>821</sup> Through KNOWING IS SEEING<sup>822</sup> we understand that the author refers here to understanding or perception by mind.<sup>823</sup> Knowledge is a relational term in Wis. The perception by the senses does not yet mean true knowledge;<sup>824</sup> true seeing comes through wisdom (4:15, 17; 5:2; 11:13; 12:27; 13:1, 7; 16:18; 18:1, 4, 13, 19).<sup>825</sup> Ἀκούσατε οὖν βασιλεῖς καὶ σύνετε μάθετε<sup>826</sup> in 6:1 explains that true listening implies understanding and learning (see also 6:9); thus, similarly to the *thinking of God* in 1:1, it is an active deed. 6:1-2 also forms an inclusion with 1:1 (ἀγαπήσατε δικαιοσύνην οἱ κρίνοντες τὴν γῆν φρονήσατε περὶ τοῦ κυρίου ἐν ἀγαθότητι καὶ ἐν ἀπλότητι καρδίας ζητήσατε αὐτόν) thus drawing a parallel between true listening and loving wisdom (see also 6:17b). The knowledge of God is, thus, the prerogative of the righteous alone.

7:21 says that wisdom taught “what is secret and what is manifest” (cf. 10:10 and 7:17-21). Wisdom provides both theoretical (2:13, 22-23; 8:8, 21; 7:17-22a<sup>827</sup>) and practical knowledge (8:7; 9:9ff; 10:8).<sup>828</sup> But first of all, this knowledge has a religious aspect; it is a “transforming religious experience . . . presented in terms of the knowledge of God. This knowledge is saving, for it makes men children and friends of God” (2:13, 16; 3:9; 7:27; 15:2-3; cf. 5:7), as Reese

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<sup>821</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 130: 13:5-6 and 6:12 links “the Greek approach to God through contemplation and the biblical image of seeking the Lord.” Reese refers here to Georg Ziener, *Die theologische Begriffssprache im Buche der Weisheit*, BBB 11 (Bonn: Hanstein, 1956), 23, who argues that in both cases (13:5-6 and 6:12) θεωρέω is used in the Greek philosophical sense of mental vision.

<sup>822</sup> Cf. Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 48, 190-191.

<sup>823</sup> Ziener, “Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium,” 49-57: the terms knowledge, seeing and believing are related; they define the mental perception, the revelatory knowledge of the will and action of God and of the righteous’ status and fate; this is then to serve as the norm for right attitude and action. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 141-142: “The imagery of sight plays a significant role in the Sage’s teaching. God is ‘eternal light’ (7.26), and divine Wisdom is his ‘radiance,’ shining to the very ends of the universe (7.26; 8.1). . . . By means of this image he links the effects of the Law, ‘incorruptible light’ for mankind (18.4), with the ‘light of justice’ that shines eternally for God’s children (5.6).” This image comes to the fore in 3:7 where the righteous shines forth and runs like sparks. See the metaphor of light below.

<sup>824</sup> McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 140-142.

<sup>825</sup> See Bennema, *The Power of Saving Wisdom*, 63; cf. the article of Stefan Beyerle, “Tod und Erkenntnis in der antik-jüdischen Weisheit,” in *The Human Body in Death and Resurrection*, ed. Tobias Nicklas et al., DCLY 2009 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009), 158-162.

<sup>826</sup> Listen therefore, O kings, and understand; learn.

<sup>827</sup> Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 172: 7:17-22a describes knowledge as a “full range of human science and philosophy (i.e. ontology, cosmology, physics, astronomy, biology, botany, esoteric knowledge).”

<sup>828</sup> Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 154: φρόνησις has both theoretical and practical implications; the author follows Platonic tradition. According to Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 77, φρόνησις is used in the sense of “practical wisdom.” For knowledge see also chaps. 7-8.

says, and he continues claiming that the righteous can be equated with the wise because it is wisdom that makes people righteous.<sup>829</sup> Being the child of God also means “right ethical conduct, i.e., a behaviour that pleases God”<sup>830</sup> (see 2:12-13; 8:7; 9:10-12, 18). But knowledge also includes the knowledge of God, His power and works (2:13; 8:4, 8, 21; 10:10; 14:22;<sup>831</sup> 15:3; 16:22)<sup>832</sup> and the knowledge of the structure of the universe, the way God created it, and ordered it (7:17-20).<sup>833</sup> Knowledge of the world order also includes the knowledge of immortality (1:13-14; 2:22-23).<sup>834</sup> 7:27 says that wisdom makes people friends of God and prophets, which means that they have insight into the divine plan (2:22). This is the ἀλήθεια<sup>835</sup> of 3:9, i.e. God’s plan for humanity,<sup>836</sup> his secrets that are revealed only for the righteous (see 2:22).<sup>837</sup> The link between 2:13 and 2:22-23 associates knowledge with the secrets of God that is

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<sup>829</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 141.

<sup>830</sup> Bennema, *The Power of Saving Wisdom*, 66. Manfredi, “The Trial of the Righteous,” 172: “in the context of Wisdom ‘to have knowledge of the Lord’ does not have the speculative value which it would have if it were founded on Hellenistic culture, but it is inserted in the Biblical tradition and is equivalent to being faithful to . . . the observance of the law.” However, I think the term means much more than this in Wis since it is connected to being the child of God (2:13), as well as to the knowledge of God (2:13) and his purposes (2:22-23). For the prophetic texts which serve as background for the *knowledge of God*, see Manfredi, “The Trial of the Righteous,” 171-172.

<sup>831</sup> Objective genitive in Wis 2:13 and 14:22 (see “γνώσις,” *BDAG*, ad loc.), which “functions semantically as the *direct object* of the verbal idea implicit in the head noun” (Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996], 116).

<sup>832</sup> See Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 64. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 133: “the Sage links justice and immortality. The flashback [of 1:15 in 15:3] supplies the middle term between them, namely, the vivifying power of the saving God.”

<sup>833</sup> See Ziener, *Die theologische Begriffssprache*, 140-141; Collins, “Cosmos and Salvation,” 320-324; Goff, “Adam, the Angels and Eternal Life,” 4.

<sup>834</sup> Kolarcik, “Creation and Salvation,” 103: “Salvation, for the author of Wisdom, is understood as God’s effort to bring humanity to the point of realizing the original intentions at creation.” Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 31-32: “Like the composer of the *Hôdâyôt*, and like Philo (for whom mystical experience of God is obtainable in this life), the author of Wisd experiences the raptures of Divine Knowledge in his present existence (chap. 7) and already enjoys his prize of immortality.”

<sup>835</sup> Truth.

<sup>836</sup> See Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 74.

<sup>837</sup> “μυστήριον,” L&N, ad loc.: “There is a serious problem involved in translating μυστήριον by a word which is equivalent to the English expression ‘mystery,’ for this term in English refers to a secret which people have tried to uncover and but which they have failed to understand. In many instances μυστήριον is translated by a phrase meaning ‘that which was not known before,’ with the implication of its being revealed at least to some persons.”

God created us for incorruption.<sup>838</sup> This aspect of knowledge also goes with the recognition that God works on the salvation of all through wisdom (5:17-23; chaps. 11-19).<sup>839</sup>

What we could see here is that knowledge arises from the communion of man with wisdom. This knowledge transforms one into the child of God and also friend of God (7:14). Being a child of God means a new, immortal, existence in the realm of God. Knowledge is not only the condition of this new existence, but also the quality of it. This leads to a perception of immortality that is defined qualitatively by knowledge. Wis 15:3 is one of the most powerful examples of the connection between knowledge and immortality:

τὸ γὰρ ἐπίστασθαί σε ὁλόκληρος δικαιοσύνη  
καὶ εἰδέναι σου τὸ κράτος ῥίζα ἀθανασίας<sup>840</sup>

The parallelism relates knowledge with righteousness<sup>841</sup> and righteousness with immortality.<sup>842</sup> This latter was discussed before, so we focus on knowledge. Knowledge is also equated with the root of immortality, and the knowledge of God's power that is to understand the salvific intention and deeds of God.<sup>843</sup> Knowledge here is, thus, viewed as saving knowledge that makes people righteous and assures immortality. This knowledge is relational;<sup>844</sup> it is found only in communion with God. Thus, immortality is once again perceived as a relational concept.

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<sup>838</sup> Goff, "Adam, the Angels and Eternal Life," 3-4: "The secret of God" refers to knowledge of God and cosmos, including God's plan for the creation. See also "γινώσχω," *BDAG*, ad loc.

<sup>839</sup> See more at McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 110-131, who lists the elements of knowledge: acquiring earthly goods that come with wisdom (7:7-14), the knowledge of the world and planets (7:15-22), the knowledge of wisdom herself—in relation to the cosmos, life, and God—(7:22-8:1), the acquisition of virtues (8:2-21), the knowledge of the salvation history (10:1-21).

<sup>840</sup> For to know you is complete righteousness, and to know your power is the root of immortality.

<sup>841</sup> Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 41, notes that this idea already appears in Wis 2:13 where knowledge is attributed to the righteous.

<sup>842</sup> Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 41-42.

<sup>843</sup> Murphy, "To Know Your Might is the Root of Immortality," 88-93, has pointed out the possible interpretation of *might* against the OT concept of death and 15:5, 17 that speaks of dead idols, thus arguing for the meaning "God's death-destroying power" (cf. 16:13); experiencing this power leads to immortality.

<sup>844</sup> Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 41, understands this knowledge "die ganze Person umfassende Beziehung zu Gott," the whole person's comprehensive relationship to God; he also notes that given this meaning, knowledge can be viewed as assuring immortality.



### 2.2.9 Being a King and Judge

In addition, there is another image that underscores the immortality of man, the kingship of everyday man<sup>845</sup> that is related to the idea that God created all “in the image of his own eternity” (2:23).

καὶ τῇ σοφίᾳ σου κατασκευάσας ἄνθρωπον  
ἵνα  
δεσπόζῃ τῶν ὑπὸ σοῦ γενομένων κτισμάτων  
καὶ διέπῃ τὸν κόσμον  
ἐν ὁσιότητι καὶ δικαιοσύνῃ  
καὶ  
ἐν εὐθύτητι ψυχῆς  
κρίσιν κρίνῃ<sup>846</sup> (9:2-3).

Man is appointed to rule over creation (similar to Ps 8; Gen 1-2<sup>847</sup>), “notwithstanding his mortal condition, in view of his immortal incorruptibility”<sup>848</sup> (cf. 7:1-6; 8:19-20; 2:23). Here we can again see the two aspects of human beings, mortality and immortality. The regality of man evolves from his acceptance of being mortal and weak. As Vignolo formulates it,<sup>849</sup> “yielding to

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<sup>845</sup> We find different connotations of *kingship* in Wis, i.e. the kingship of rulers (see 6:1-3f; 8:10ff) and the kingship of everyday man (9:3f). The first connotation is not relevant for us; therefore, we only deal with the second connotation. There is universalism in the conception of the ideal king in Wis. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 76: the author “wants his ideal king, his just and wise ‘man,’ to be understood not as the individual King Solomon but rather as the type of everyman, . . . not as a member of a particular people but as belonging to the one human race that he created (12.8).” See also Clarke, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 15, 63-64. However, McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 60 n. 21, says that it is important to keep the “fiction” of rulers “because of the responsibility for justice and compassion which is most pointed in the case of the rulers” (see 6:5-6). McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 59-60, also notes that the ideal king who rules with wisdom and mercy has “historical and eschatological roles. Solomon, therefore, represents not merely the historical king, but the characteristics of the eschatological and messianic king to come.” See further the combination of the messianic kingship with philosophical ideas of kingship in Moyna McGlynn, “Solomon, Wisdom and the Philosopher-Kings,” in Xeravits and Zsengellér, *Studies in the Book of Wisdom*, 61-81.

<sup>846</sup> And by your wisdom have formed humankind to have dominion over the creatures you have made, and rule the world in holiness and righteousness, and pronounce judgment in uprightness of soul.

<sup>847</sup> For Wis’ link with Gen 1-3, see Gilbert, “La relecture,” 323-344.

<sup>848</sup> Vignolo, “Wisdom, Prayer and Kingly Pattern.” Note that this view on the regality of man makes the reading of wicked under the term “rulers” possible in 5:23.

<sup>849</sup> Vignolo, “Wisdom, Prayer and Kingly Pattern,” 277.

be born . . . goes together with admitting depending on someone else and therefore being mortal. From this ‘anthropological confession’ . . . comes out, at once, the founding and motivating value of the following request of Wisdom.” And he goes on, “notwithstanding death, regality is man’s true vocation indeed.”<sup>850</sup> “The ruler metaphor emphasized the goodness of human nature and the freedom to go forth into the world to master life and to rule responsibly as the vice-regents of God. As ruler, humanity actively participated in the beneficent ordering and sustaining of nature and society.”<sup>851</sup> Thus the regality of man also involves that the virtues of God, justice and righteousness (12:15) have to be acquired by man through divine wisdom who teaches man (see 7:13-22; 8:5-7ff; 9:3, 12).<sup>852</sup> While Job “challenges the royal metaphor with the view that humans experience creation as a life of slavery, for they are in bondage to an oppressive and corrupt tyrant,”<sup>853</sup> for Wis human life is based on the idea that God created man according to his own eternity and, therefore, man is king over creation. This also leads to the idea that a just rule over creation (6:3) leads to immortality (6:18).

The texts we discuss in the following show the completion of the kingship of man: after his death the righteous is elevated to the Kingdom of God where he will rule and judge nations. From the context of the texts that we discussed above it is evident that these texts speak about the kingship of the righteous in terms of their afterlife.

The righteous, who is elevated into the heavenly sphere (5:15), is invested with high authority:<sup>854</sup>

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<sup>850</sup> Vignolo, “Wisdom, Prayer and Kingly Pattern,” 279. See also Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 72; Raurell, “From, ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗ to ἈΘΑΝΑΣΙΑ” 334. Vignolo, “Wisdom, Prayer and Kingly Pattern,” 280: “the feature of regality is redeemed, provided that the mortal condition would be restored completely and realistically, acknowledging an immortal and eternal destination to it (inclusive of resurrection, besides immortality of the soul).”

<sup>851</sup> Perdue, *Wisdom in Revolt*, 63.

<sup>852</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 76, observes here the idea of the “hellenistic (*sic*) philosophical conception of the wise man as imitator of the provident divinity.”

<sup>853</sup> Perdue, *Wisdom in Revolt*, 69.

<sup>854</sup> Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 96: βασιλειον is mentioned in the sense of kingdom here and in 1:14. Burton L. Mack, “Wisdom Makes a Difference: Alternatives to ‘Messianic’ Configurations,” in *Judaisms and Their Messiahs at the Turn of the Christian Era*, ed. Jacob Neusner, William Scott Green and Ernest S. Frerichs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987; repr., 1996), 15-48, notes that the book emphasizes the royal office; however, he also observes that Wis does not specify in what the kingship of the righteous lies. He assumes that this is the result of the contemporary social circumstances which belies the power of the righteous.

διὰ τοῦτο λήμνονται  
τὸ βασίλειον τῆς εὐπρεπείας  
καὶ  
τὸ διάδημα τοῦ κάλλους  
ἐκ χειρὸς κυρίου  
ὅτι τῇ δεξιᾷ σκεπάσει αὐτοὺς  
καὶ τῷ βραχίονι ὑπερασπιεῖ αὐτῶν<sup>855</sup> (5:16).

The previous verse (5:15) uses the metaphorical structuring LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE combined with ALIVE IS UP, which is now extended by the ruler metaphor, thus defining immortality as being a king in the realm of God. The crown and diadem points back to 3:8, which says that the rule of the righteous consists of:

κρinoῦσιν ἔθνη  
καὶ κρατήσουσιν λαῶν  
καὶ βασιλεύσει αὐτῶν κύριος εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας<sup>856</sup>

The verse ascribes characteristics similar to God to the righteous; he will judge nations and rule over people.<sup>857</sup> We also find the answer why the righteous can be a judge over the others.<sup>858</sup> The text implies a relationship between God and the righteous: the Lord will reign over the righteous forever. Another text has to be mentioned here, the last proposition of the chain of conclusions we described above. Ἐπιθυμία ἄρα σοφίας ἀνάγει ἐπὶ βασιλείαν (6:20) sums up 6:17-19 by using the premise of the first proposition and the conclusion of the last proposition: the desire for wisdom leads to a kingdom.<sup>859</sup> Although the context may imply earthly rule,<sup>860</sup> too, the author

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<sup>855</sup> Therefore they will receive a glorious crown and a beautiful diadem from the hand of the Lord, because with his right hand he will cover them, and with his arm he will shield them.

<sup>856</sup> They will judge nations and rule over peoples, and the Lord will reign over them forever [own trans.].

<sup>857</sup> Cf. Dan 7:22; See Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 33; McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 84.

<sup>858</sup> For the question whether all righteous are appointed as judges, see above the discussion of ALIVE IS UP.

<sup>859</sup> Although 6:17-20 is usually considered as a sorites, Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 105, notes that 6:20 is an “irrelevant conclusion . . . a *non sequitur*.” He also notes that the proper conclusion would be “the desire of wisdom brings near to God” (*The Book of Wisdom*, 105). Amir, “The Figure of Death,” 154-155 n. 2, calls the author’s use of logical conclusions “clumsy,” lacking “a uniform terminology,” and the chain of conclusions “loose”; he also notes that a final link is missing from the chain (closeness to God, leads to a kingdom),

probably also refers to the reign of the righteous after death.<sup>861</sup> The βασιλεία is linked to being near to God (6:19), and this defines kingship as the quality of the communion with God. “The desire for wisdom has been shown to make one near to God, and it is this divine intimacy which is the true source of all sovereignty, both spiritual and earthly” of the righteous.<sup>862</sup> The wicked, who do not have relation with God, cannot be judges, but they will be judged. So, the relationship with God is the prerogative of the righteous alone and this relationship enables the righteous to be judge. Similar idea we read in 5:16: the parallel (ὅτι τῇ δεξιᾷ σκεπάσει αὐτοὺς καὶ τῷ βραχίονι ὑπερασπιεῖ αὐτῶν) explains that the righteous can receive crown because the Lord “will shield” him with his right hand and arm. 5:16cd, thus, parallels 3:8c, but a stronger link may be 3:1: ἐκ χειρὸς κυρίου (5:16b), τῇ δεξιᾷ (5:16c), τῷ βραχίονι (5:16d) develop the idea of ἐν χειρὶ θεοῦ in 3:1, that is life, protection and kingship in the realm of God. So kingship is highlighted as the quality of the communion with God, and it is connected to protection and life. Those who are protected by God and share immortality are appointed as kings and judges.<sup>863</sup> As to the judging role of the righteous, we can observe what a change takes place in the life of

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“unless we arbitrarily assume a lacuna in the text.” Earlier Goodrick, *Wisdom*, 175, noted the imperfection of the sorites.

<sup>860</sup> The exhortation is addressed to the kings of the earth.

<sup>861</sup> See Wright, “Wisdom,” 561. Reider, *The Book of Wisdom*, 105: the next verse (6:21) clearly refers to earthly rule. I believe that 6:20 is possibly neither about the heavenly kingdom of 10:10 nor the earthly rule of the righteous mentioned in 6:3 and 6:21, but the eschatological kingship of the righteous in God’s kingdom that is his participation in God’s kingdom. The arguments that support this are the following: 6:21 does not rule out the understanding of the eschatological kingship under βασιλεία in 6:20; the second part of the verse mentions εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα βασιλεύσητε, which probably refers to the eschatological reign of the righteous. There are references to holiness (6:10), immortality (6:19-20) and eternal rule of the righteous king (6:21) in chap. 6, which underlines the eschatological connotation of v. 20. Moreover, the paralleling thought in 3:8 where the elevated righteous is seen ruling forever supports this explanation. And last, but not least, we should not forget that the whole book has eschatological reference. Reading 6:20 against this background, I would rather explain it as the eschatological reward received by the righteous who rules with wisdom on earth; thus the earthly reign of the kings (6:3; 6:21a) is connected to eternal reign. McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 107-108, also argues: “that this kingdom is not only to be understood in the sense of the eschatological kingdom of 5.16, is shown by the immediate reference to thrones and sceptres, the symbols of earthly power in 6.21, and a link is thus formed between earthly justice and eschatological reward (6.24-25).”

<sup>862</sup> Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 156.

<sup>863</sup> Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life*, 68: “Immortality is the state in virtue of which this vindication, authentication, and exaltation take place.”

the righteous and that of the wicked when the righteous is appointed as judge over the wicked. The stage for judgment is set in 5:1-2 where the unrighteous and the righteous face each other.<sup>864</sup>

τότε στήσεται ἐν παρρησίᾳ πολλῇ ὁ δίκαιος  
κατὰ πρόσωπον τῶν θλιψάντων αὐτὸν  
καὶ τῶν ἀθετούντων τοὺς πόνους αὐτοῦ  
ιδόντες ταραχθήσονται φόβῳ δεινῷ  
καὶ ἐκστήσονται ἐπὶ τῷ παραδόξῳ τῆς σωτηρίας<sup>865</sup>

The setting is similar to that of 2:12-20, where the unrighteous and the righteous are set in opposition to each other, but while earlier in chap. 2 the unrighteous was mastering the situation by condemning the righteous to death, in chap. 5 their situation has been reversed. The parallel in 5:1bc generates an atmosphere of tension. The righteous that was once oppressed now stands “with great confidence” in the time of judgment as the judge that condemns the unrighteous. The righteous’ confidence opposite to the dreadful fear of the wicked tells a lot. It expresses that immortality brings glory and honour for the righteous that died a shameful death.<sup>866</sup> The metaphor that views the righteous as judge also implies the surety of immortality. And this may also imply that the righteous will not be judged.<sup>867</sup> He underwent an examination on earth,<sup>868</sup> and because he pleased God (4:10), he was elevated into his realm and appointed as king. Therefore he will not be judged in the sense of condemnation.<sup>869</sup>

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<sup>864</sup> Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 101, says about τότε στήσεται: “The gesture of rising up or the posture of standing are positions that describe a formal function in biblical trial proceedings. The judge rises to pronounce the judgment. An accuser or or witness stands to pronounce an accusation or to make a defense. . . [in Wis 5] the very presence of the just who is to be rewarded by God accuses the wicked.”

<sup>865</sup> Then the righteous will stand with great confidence in the presence of those who have oppressed them and those who make light of their labors. When the unrighteous see them, they will be shaken with dreadful fear, and they will be amazed at the unexpected salvation of the righteous.

<sup>866</sup> The link with 2:17-20 also emphasizes God’s saving power.

<sup>867</sup> Cf. Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life*, 61.

<sup>868</sup> As it was said, wisdom exposes good and evil (1:1-5). Thus, when one enters a relation with wisdom and God (7:27), we can say that he has passed a kind of judgment, this, however, not in the sense of condemnation that was described with regards to the wicked.

<sup>869</sup> The idea of the righteous’ judgment of others is also mentioned in 4:16. Clarke, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 38 does not accept the eschatological interpretation of this latter text.

In conclusion, man's regality is related to his nature as a being created in the image of God's eternity (2:23). The regality of man is accomplished after death when the righteous becomes king and judge in the Kingdom of God. The kingship of the righteous after death is different from his earthly rule. Although both imply relationship with God and authority, "the Lord will reign over them forever" defines the righteous' state after death as an eternal state, an eternal relationship between the Lord God and the righteous, thus reflecting on kingship after death as the quality of immortality. For while man's kingship on earth can be lost if he gets perverted, his status as king and judge is a final and eternal state after death, and as such it does not change. So it reflects the surety of immortality: the righteous will never be judged, since he will always be the king and judge and never undergoes judgment.

## 2.3 Conclusion

In concluding the discussion on the concept of immortality in Wis we can outline two major lines in the discussion: immortality in the context of cosmology and the perception of immortality through different metaphorical conceptions.

There are several terms that denote the concept of immortality and eternal life: αἰώνιος, ἄφθαρτος, ἀθάνατος, ἀιδιότης. Observing these terms alone, however, does not do justice to the concept of immortality in Wis. Immortality is so richly structured in Wis that we have to look beyond these terms and see what concepts and structures are related to it and define it. Without looking at all these we would remain with a partial view on immortality in Wis.

The first part of our discussion has dealt with the cosmological view of the text and demonstrated how the understanding of cosmos influences the idea of immortality in Wis. We have depicted three separate and contrasting realms that are seen in Wis, the Kingdom of God, the earth and Hades. The Kingdom of God above is characterized by continuity, permanence, life and transcendence. The human world is a limited space; it is described in terms of time and change. The third realm, Hades, is the world of evil and death. These worlds interact on earth and the context in which the concept of immortality is to be perceived is the constant dynamics between these opposite but overlapping worlds.

From the very beginning, Wis emphasizes the idea that the world was ordered to be in harmony with its Creator and man was created for eternity (1:13-14; 2:23). Through the wisdom of God that is present on earth since creation (9:1-2), a twofold movement is seen that connects the divine and human world: God approaches man and man approaches God. We have shown that this approach is pivotal to immortality and it is wisdom that becomes instrumental. Wisdom brings humankind in relation to God and by this, up into the sphere of eternity. Through wisdom man is present in the life of God and this (eternal) life makes him immortal. Immortality, therefore, is not a characteristic inherent in people, but the gift of God through wisdom for those who relate to him.

Hades also tries to approach man. The wicked that resort to this third realm will not have immortality, but they will share ultimate death. Perceiving the cosmos in terms of overlapping worlds also has the consequence of viewing immortality and ultimate death as realities already present on earth. Beside their earthly existence people also live in a spiritual reality they have chosen and they already share the properties of this reality; thus the righteous shares immortality and the wicked shares death already during his earthly life. The dynamics of the three realms constantly calls our attention to the fact that one's fate is determined by the position one takes in his earthly life, with his value system at the root of it.

Wis displays an optimistic perspective on human life. The hope for eternal life in Wis arises from its doctrine of God and theology of creation. It depicts an eternal Creator that fashions the world and humankind for living and works for carrying out this plan. We encounter a God that is almighty, whose power over creation cannot be lessened. Although the movement of Hades into the earth causes disturbance, it cannot interfere with God's plan; God's creation remains good, still based on the principle on which it was created. The several roles of God enhance the image of salvation; besides the image of a transcendent and omniscient creator, we can see the sovereign but merciful king that protects and provides his people, the father and friend who makes family bonds and shares his life with the righteous.

After looking at how the concept of immortality interacts with the worldview of Wis, we turned to see the inner structure of the concept of immortality: what are the concepts in terms of which immortality is defined. Let us first remember that immortality is viewed as man's original state

in 2:23. This statement does not contradict the creation theology of 1:14 that God purposed humankind for immortality. Purpose and state together define the concept in the duality of human cognition and God's will. Both aspects, however, imply the union of man with wisdom. Only in symbiosis with wisdom can man be present with God and achieve immortality. The opposite of this is also true of Wis' understanding of immortality: only immortality brings one near God (6:19a). It is the existence of a general idea of immortality that makes possible to attain individual immortality.

Wis extends the metaphorical conception of immortality as presence with God by several other metaphors. These metaphors elaborate *presence* in terms of being in the hand of God, remaining in love, being at peace, being the child of God, being light, having knowledge or being king in God's kingdom. These metaphors are all coherent; each of them shows a different aspect of the concept of immortality. Our discussion could probably be extended, but having analysed these concepts related to immortality, we believe that we could create a clearer picture of how immortality is perceived in Wis.



### 3 The Concept of Life in John Defined in Terms of Different Conceptual Metaphors

The theme of eternal life in John is discussed similarly to the way I elaborated the Wis material. The ordered material related to eternal life resembles in structure the discussion on Wis. Knowing that my procedure could be questioned, I must state that I did not try to force the Johannine material into the structure of discussion on Wis. After doing my preliminary analysis, gathering, analysing and systematizing relevant occurrences of *eternal life* and other themes related to it in John, I observed that much part of the material I found in John is similar to the material in Wis; moreover, many times topics, metaphors, images are linked together in a similar way, thus providing the possibility for comparison and even for a similar arrangement of the material. In light of this, I decided to follow a similar structure with the aim of systematizing the comparison more clearly and in a more effective way. I hope that due to this structuring similarities and differences between Wis and John regarding the concepts of immortality and eternal life will become more evident. Admitting this, I emphasize again that I did not force the material into a pre-build structure; the possibility of similar structuring arose only when I analysed and systematized the material of John. Wherever the structure I used in Wis does not allow the material flow, I deviate from it.

In anticipation of the discussion below, I would like to mention again that in a preliminary analysis I have analysed and systematized the material related to eternal life in John. It turned out that the terminology related to eternity and eternal life in John is the following: αἰών, αἰώνιος, ζωή αἰώνιος, or many times only ζωή. Αἰών does not appear as a noun; it only appears as an adverb together with εἰς τὸν (4:14; 6:51, 58; 8:51, 52; 10:28; 11:26; 12:34; 13:8; 14:16) and ἐκ τοῦ (9:32), the latter in the sense of *since the world began*. The adjective αἰώνιος only occurs in connection with life, ζωή αἰώνιος (3:15, 16, 36a; 4:14; 4:36; 5:24a, 39; 6:27, 40, 47, 54, 68; 10:28; 12:25, 50; 17:2, 3), but ζωή without αἰώνιος also has to be read as eternal life throughout

the Gospel.<sup>870</sup> The majority of the terms are found in chaps. 4-6;<sup>871</sup> the later chapters relate to the theme of eternal life by way of mentioning *life* in “central positions.”<sup>872</sup> It is important to state that I am not going to discuss all the occurrences of these terms, only the references that are relevant and illustrate my point in describing the concept of eternal life in John. Therefore, I do not describe, but only mention those occurrences which, I feel, add nothing new to the discussion. I do not follow the order of the occurrences in the Gospel either; I tried to arrange the material based on certain aspects of eternal life which, in my view, will make the comparison with Wis easier. Besides the terms mentioned above, there are different metaphors that structure the concept of eternal life in John. These metaphors display different aspects of eternal life, such as the relation between life and the domain up, life and faith, life and light, life and love, life and knowledge, life and peace, as well as the aspects conceived via life as presence, being in the hand of God, being the child of God, and last but not least, life as communion with God.<sup>873</sup> I shall also mention the opposing concepts, judgment and death, and contrast the concept of life with them.

Having analysed the concept of eternal life, I can say that John is centred on the possibility of receiving eternal life through faith in Jesus (20:30-31; see also 3:14-16, 35-36; 5:21, 24; 6:40, 47; 11:26). This life is a new existence that qualitatively corresponds to the life of God and, therefore, it makes man able to transcend his limitedness and be part of the family of God.<sup>874</sup> The person who receives life starts to live in the divine reality of God besides living on earth; this

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<sup>870</sup> Ζωή occurs 36 times in John and it always means *eternal* life, even when it occurs without αἰώνιος. See Barclay M. Newman and Eugene A. Nida, *A Translator's Handbook on the Gospel of John*, HeTr (London: United Bible Societies, 1980), 11; Jan G. van der Watt, “Johannine Style: Some Initial Remarks on the Functional Use of Repetition in the Gospel according to John,” *IDS* 42(2008): 80-83.

<sup>871</sup> See the chart in van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 201.

<sup>872</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 202. For a detailed description of the position of the references in relation to their context, see van der Watt, “Johannine Style,” 80-83; Jan G. van der Watt, “The Use of ΑΙΩΝΙΟΣ in the Concept ΖΩΗ ΑΙΩΝΙΟΣ in John's Gospel,” *NovT* 31 (1989): 217-228.

<sup>873</sup> Craig R. Koester, *The Word of Life: A Theology of John's Gospel* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2008), 56: “‘Life’ is a central theme for John, though the concept is never fully defined. Instead, the characteristics of ‘life’ are suggested by the Gospel's imagery.”

<sup>874</sup> The family of God metaphor is described in detail by van der Watt in his major work, *Family of the King*, 123-138; he argues that the concepts and images of John's Gospel form several “metaphorical networks”; in this case, the concepts of life, love, knowledge, etc. are viewed as part of the family metaphor.

new spiritual existence determines his identity and actions (8:34ff; 12:25-26; 15:12).<sup>875</sup> Eternal life is defined qualitatively in several places as relation with Jesus and God, love, light, knowledge, peace, protection and power (3:16-17; 4:14; 5:24; 17:3; 10:28-29). And because those who receive it will not die, eternal life also has quantitative dimension that is it lasts forever.

### 3.1 Cosmological View on Life in John

Eternal life is set in the context of cosmology. The creation that points to salvation, the orientational metaphors that view the cosmos in its structure and perceive the fate of human beings in the context of this structure, and the metaphors that relate eternal life to the realm of God show that it is essential to discuss the concept of life in John in the context of cosmology as well.

The following discussion will reveal that the cosmos in John is structured in terms of the orientational metaphors GOD IS UP and the EARTH/DEVIL IS DOWN. So the cosmos we see in John encompasses the *above* and the *below*. The above comes to mean the transcendent realm of God and everything related to it (1:51; 12:29), and, therefore, eternal, good and divine, while below signifies the creation, the earthly, the limited, human or even evil (8:23; 12:31). Thus, it is a two-storey cosmos.<sup>876</sup> Naturally, below is contrasted with above. However, these contrasts are of a different type: there is a creational contrast that implies qualitative difference between heaven and earth that results in human limitation, and there is an ethical contrast between God and the

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<sup>875</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 178-183.

<sup>876</sup> See Robert Kysar, *John the Maverick Gospel*, 3rd ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2007), 73-78, who, however thinks that the important issue for the Johannine Christians was not the structure of the cosmos, but how people define themselves against God, their attitude towards the divine realm (78). See also Thomas Evan Pollard, *Johannine Christology and the Early Church*, SNTSMS 13 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 20, who notes that John does not seem to be much interested in cosmology; creation through Logos is mentioned only in the Prologue. Pollard follows W. F. Lofthouse, *The Father and the Son: A Study in Johannine Thought* (London: SCM, 1934), 47, in saying that John is more interested in redemption than cosmology. However, the note on cosmology still gets an important role in John since redemption is related to the one through whom everything was created, and who comes from above—an idea we already saw in Wis.

devil.<sup>877</sup> This latter contrast extends to the relation between God and the earth, too, as a consequence of the fact that the devil resides on earth (8:23; 12:31; 14:30; 16:11).<sup>878</sup> Because of this structuring of the universe that presents a complete overlapping between the earth and the devil's realm, we do not describe the three realities in separate chapters, as we did in the discussion about Wis, but we look at them in relation to each other, thus emphasizing the dynamics and contrasts between them.

The creational and ethical contrast has its consequences. The creational contrast reveals contrasting times with the divine as eternal (1:1) and the earthly as a limited timeframe (1:3). The ethical contrast is elaborated in several images that divide God's realm from that of the devil.<sup>879</sup> This ethical division affects humanity as well since they are split into *the followers of Jesus* (1:12-13) and *the followers of the devil* (8:44). The value system of these two groups shows the root of the difference that leads to their opposing worldviews and ethics.

The discussion on cosmology and eternal life exposes the mission of Jesus to bridge the creational contrast between God and human beings, teach man how to live and, thus, bring humanity in unity with God. We shall take a look at Jesus' earthly life that is perceived as a journey, with special focus on the metaphors LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE and DEATH IS DEPARTURE TO A FINAL LOCATION with the direction of ascent. The scheme presented by Jesus' earthly life and death serves as a pattern on which the life of human beings should be based. The metaphor ALIVE IS UP directs our cognition to the perception of eternal life as being in the realm of God or, as the Gospel says, in the Father's house.

The consequences of not following Jesus present themselves in the concepts of judgment in the sense of condemnation and perishing. At the end of the chapter on cosmology we define eternal

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<sup>877</sup> Van der Watt, *Introduction*, 30-31.

<sup>878</sup> The creational and ethical contrasts, thus, can overlap, since the creational contrast between human and God can become ethical contrast, too (van der Watt, *Introduction*, 30-31).

<sup>879</sup> See Kysar, *John the Maverick Gospel*, 74.

life against judgment and perishing; the contrast with judgment and perishing delineates the concept of eternal life more sharply.

### 3.1.1 God and the Earth

The picture of God and that of Jesus forms a mosaic similar to what we saw in Wis. God appears as the creator, father, saviour and judge. Jesus appears as king, brother, saviour, judge and friend.<sup>880</sup> Since we look at the realm of God both in relation to the earth and devil, we do not analyse all the aforesaid metaphors in this chapter, but we do it whenever it naturally arises from the discussion. Thus, the judging function of God and Jesus is discussed in relation to the devil, while friendship is discussed in relation to the metaphors of love and abiding.

#### 3.1.1.1 The Creator, the Creation and the Logos

The statement most convenient to start our discussion with is the one that points to the source of creation and life: God is defined as ὁ ζῶν in 6:57. The participle of ζάω describes God as eternal, but also identifies him as the source of life.<sup>881</sup> 5:26 expresses similar idea: ἔχει ζωὴν ἐν ἑαυτῷ.<sup>882</sup> But perhaps the most emphatic assertion is the first verse of the Prologue that claims the eternity of God and that of the Logos:<sup>883</sup>

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<sup>880</sup> We do not discuss other images of Jesus, e.g. shepherd, for our main point here is the doctrine of God in relation to the concept of eternal life. The images left out strengthen certain properties we already find in the other images, e.g. protection in the case of the shepherd. See how the different images of Jesus are connected and function within a passage and on the level of the entire Gospel, in Zimmermann, "Imagery in John," 30-43.

<sup>881</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 204 n. 181: "This phrase only occurs here in the New Testament. In this Gospel it identifies God as the source of all life and can be linked to the idea of God as creator." See Newman and Nida, *A Translator's Handbook*, 209; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:283; Marianne Meye Thompson, "Thinking about God: Wisdom and Theology in John 6," in *Critical Readings of John 6*, ed. R. Alan Culpepper, BibInt 22 (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 233-234. Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, 269-270: "the Father is self-subsistent and the source of all life." The idea that God is self-begotten appears in both Jewish and pagan sources; see Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:653-654.

<sup>882</sup> Marianne Meye Thompson, *The God of the Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 77, notes that the Gospel emphasizes the idea of God as "the living Father."

<sup>883</sup> G. R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, WBC 36 (Waco, TX: Word, 1987), 10, reflecting on the use of the term logos says that nothing else (i.e. Son of Man, Christ, Lord or Wisdom) "could adequately convey the associations of the following utterances, for the connotation of 'the Word' is unique." For the different titles and their background, see Oscar Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament*, trans. Shirley C. Guthrie and Charles A. M. Hall, 2nd ed., NTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963); Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:283-310, 339-363.

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος  
καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν<sup>884</sup> (1:1ab).

Since these verses present God in communion with the Logos, we proceed to include the role of the Logos in creation and salvation in the discussion on God and creation. The first verses of the Prologue are the assertion of the divine nature of the Word of God. The Word of God is seen pre-existent and eternal in the sense of a “continuous timeless existence” as conveyed by the imperfect ἦν.<sup>885</sup> Πρὸς τὸν θεόν<sup>886</sup> qualifies ἐν ἀρχῇ;<sup>887</sup> we see the pre-existence of the Logos in relation to his being with God.<sup>888</sup> The categories of time and space are interrelated here: the Logos existed, and he existed with God.<sup>889</sup> This is a continuing existence that we can understand by the metaphor LIFE IS BEING PRESENT HERE with *here* elaborated in terms of being with God.<sup>890</sup>

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<sup>884</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God.

<sup>885</sup> John Henry Bernard, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. John*, ed. A. H. McNeile, 2 vols., ICC (Edinburg: Clark, 1928; repr., New York: Scribner’s Sons, 1929), 1:2. Dunn, *Christology*, 240, comments: the Word is pre-existent; the Logos is not created, but everything was created through him (cf. 1:30; 8:58; 17:24). See also Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 31-32. For the elaborate description of the different use of ἦν in the three clauses of 1:1 (existence, relationship and predication), see Jan G. van der Watt and Chrys Caragounis, “A Grammatical Analysis of John 1, 1,” FNT 21 (2008): 95-138, who took into account the history of research as well as the grammatical and contextual features of the verses.

<sup>886</sup> Caragounis, in van der Watt and Caragounis, “A Grammatical Analysis of John 1, 1,” 105-110, concludes that πρὸς + personal Acc in John 1:1b—a formula that is not used in LXX—is equivalent to παρὰ + Dat, simply meaning that the Logos *was with* God. Van der Watt, in van der Watt and Caragounis, “A Grammatical Analysis of John 1, 1,” 130-131, emphasizes the relational aspect of πρὸς here. See also Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:234.

<sup>887</sup> Although it recalls Gen 1:1, it does not refer to the act of creation, but to the period before the creation. See Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:4; Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 31; Beasley-Murray, *John*, 10. Further details see in van der Watt and Caragounis, “A Grammatical Analysis of John 1, 1,” 95-100, 129-130. Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:366, notes that “early Jewish wisdom texts celebrated the existence of Wisdom ‘in the beginning,’ and Wisdom, Torah, and the Logos were sometimes called ‘the beginning.’ . . . John does imply more than Jewish Wisdom language normally indicated, but it was easier to stretch Wisdom or Logos language to new bounds than to try to communicate Jesus’ identity with no point of contact.”

<sup>888</sup> Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:4, also notes that ἐν ἀρχῇ “is a designation, more qualitative than temporal, of the sphere of God.”

<sup>889</sup> Similar idea appears in 17:5, 24.

<sup>890</sup> Dunn, *Christology*, 241: what we read in John 1:1 parallels Philo’s Logos (*Deus* 31), where we have “the thought both of the intelligible world (κόσμος νοητός), the elder Son (i.e. = the Logos), at the side of God (παρ’ ἐαυτῷ), and of the eternal timelessness of that relation.”

Consequently, eternity is defined as the quality of the life with God, which naturally also has quantitative dimension that is everlasting.<sup>891</sup>

Differing from the Synoptics, John introduces Jesus as the pre-existent Word of God.<sup>892</sup> The statement underlines the power and authority of Jesus in salvation,<sup>893</sup> further strengthened by καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος (1:1c).<sup>894</sup> The predicative use of θεός asserts that the Logos is God.<sup>895</sup> By implication we can understand that salvation is possible through Jesus because he is God and he has eternal life: Jesus can give life because he has life (1:1-4, 30; 5:26; 6:57; 8:58; 14:6; 11:25; 14:6; 17:24).<sup>896</sup>

God, the source of life creates through the Logos.<sup>897</sup> As a consequence, Jesus is also proclaimed the origin of life:

πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο,  
καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἓν.  
ὃ γέγονεν ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν  
καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἦν τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων.<sup>898</sup> (John 1:3-4).

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<sup>891</sup> With reference to God and the Logos, as we have also observed in the context of Wis, the metaphor does not relate to the notions of birth as arrival and death as departure. With regards to the eternal life of the believers a special case of the metaphor is applied, eternal life includes no notion of departure, but there is the notion of arrival. See below this discussion.

<sup>892</sup> See Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 111. For discussion on the personal character of the Logos in the Prologue, see Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:232-233; Herman Ridderbos, "The Structure and Scope of the Prologue to the Gospel of John," *NovT* 8 (1966): 180-201; Dunn, *Christology*, 243-245.

<sup>893</sup> Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 119: "The prologue . . . provides the lens through which, or the perspective from which, the reader views Jesus."

<sup>894</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:370: "In this line it becomes clear that, although John employs the basic myth of Wisdom as the nearest available analogy to communicate his Christology, it proves inadequate. Jesus is not created like Wisdom (Sir 1:4; John 1:1b), but is himself fully deity (1:1c), bursting the traditional categories for divine Wisdom." See also Petersen, *Sociology*, 123.

<sup>895</sup> For further discussion on θεός and ὁ θεός in 1:1, see van der Watt and Caragounis, "A Grammatical Analysis of John 1, 1," 110-123; Beasley-Murray, *John*, 10-11; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:5, 24-25; Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 33-36; Arthur W. Wainwright, *The Trinity in the New Testament* (London: SPCK, 1962), 60-61; Dunn, *Christology*, 241.

<sup>896</sup> See van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 236.

<sup>897</sup> For the Jewish and Hellenistic views as the possible backgrounds of the creation by the Logos, see Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:374-381.

Similarly to Wis, the creation is mentioned at the very beginning of John.<sup>899</sup> Until 1:3 only the realm of God exists on the image level of the Prologue, but 1:3 turns towards the creation.<sup>900</sup> God created all through the Word (1:3; 1:10b).<sup>901</sup> Πάντα refers to the totality of creation, both cosmos and humankind.<sup>902</sup> The creation implies the goodness of all that was created.<sup>903</sup> Then the Gospel shifts to a special aspect of creation that of human beings,<sup>904</sup> and the Logos is proclaimed life and light.<sup>905</sup> The Logos is τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων.<sup>906</sup> At this moment the Gospel says that the Logos was from the beginning the salvation of the people that is he is the link between the

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<sup>898</sup> All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

<sup>899</sup> We do not deal with the possible readings of 1:3-4; for that see Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:6-7; Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 39-40. The point of importance for our discussion is that Jesus has life and he has given life to the creation. Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 39-40: "it does not matter here, whether one understands the text [1:4a] as: 'What has come to be—in him (the Logos) was the life (for it)'; or as: 'What has come to be—in it he (the Logos) was the life'. In both cases it is stated that life was not inherent in creatures as creatures."

<sup>900</sup> John does not seem interested in the idea that the creation reflects the Creator (cf. Wis 13:1-5). Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:377, attributes this to the fact that the issue John's audience had to face was the "creator's identification with Jesus" and not his existence. He also notes (*The Gospel of John*, 1:376) that the "emphasis is christological rather than cosmological" in the Gospel. However, Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:25, notes: "The fact that the *Word* creates means that creation is an act of revelation. All creation bears the stamp of God's Word, whence the insistence in Wis xiii 1 and Rom i 19-20 that from His creatures God is recognizable by men."

<sup>901</sup> See Beasley-Murray, *John*, 11; Pollard, *Johannine Christology*, 20; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:25-26. Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 37-38: 1:3 "excludes both the idea of emanation, and the conception of an original duality of light and darkness."

<sup>902</sup> See Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:6; see also Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:381 n. 181.

<sup>903</sup> See Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:239; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:25; Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:375-376. Wright, *The Resurrection*, 86, notes that the hope for life after death in ancient Israelite thought lies in the goodness of the present order.

<sup>904</sup> Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 44 n. 2, notes the parallel with Wis 13:1f.

<sup>905</sup> Newman and Nida, *A Translator's Handbook*, 11, explains that in the OT light was viewed as "something desirable and pleasant," belonging to the "world of the living," while in Intertestamental period the word was related to the "power of good": "In such contexts light becomes symbolic for the true revelation of God, and almost an equivalent term for God himself and for the salvation that he brings to men." Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:382-384: light was associated with God, knowledge, goodness, the righteous, the primeval light, eschatological light and glory. However, Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:385, notes that "in the context of John's prologue, it seems particularly relevant to observe that Jewish literature portrays both Wisdom and Torah as light (e.g., Ps 119:105, 130; Prov 6:23)." We shall add here that wisdom and Torah are also associated with life (see Wis 8:13, 17; Sir 4:12; 17:11; Prov 3:18; 13:14).

<sup>906</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 237: "The genitive construction (light of men—τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων) indicates that this light (singular) shines for the human race. The singular with preposition (τὸ φῶς) indicates that a single concept is to be borne in mind here (in contrast to darkness in v. 5)." Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 131, referring to Jesus' claim to be the life and light of the world in the Gospel: "The Prologue claims no more than the rest of the gospel, but sets first in a cosmological aspect what later will appear in a soteriological."



transcendence of God and the human world.<sup>907</sup> We can grasp Jesus' power over creation,<sup>908</sup> and his power to create and give life later also in the instances when he walks on the water (6:19),<sup>909</sup> changes water into wine (chap. 2),<sup>910</sup> multiplies the bread (chap. 6),<sup>911</sup> heals the blind, heals the paralytic and the official's son (4:43-54), and resurrects Lazarus (11:1-45).<sup>912</sup>

The act of creation initiates a change: the realm of God and the creation are distinguished. Moreover, they are seen as contrasting realities. The contrast between the heavenly and earthly realm is also described in terms of orientation:

Ὁ ἄνωθεν ἐρχόμενος ἐπάνω πάντων ἐστίν·  
ὁ ὢν ἐκ τῆς γῆς ἐκ τῆς γῆς ἐστίν

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<sup>907</sup> See Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:242, 1:253, who also notes (1:242) that the Prologue does not reflect on "whether and how long since the work of creation this task of the Logos, to give light to men, was actually performed." Ridderbos, "The Structure and Scope of the Prologue," 191, argues that "wherever in the Prologue the revelation of the Logos is spoken of as the light which shines in the darkness, v. 5, which lights every man, which was in the world and which came to his own, the revelation of the Logos in Jesus Christ is regularly and exclusively intended." Ridderbos, "The Structure and Scope of the Prologue," 191, also notes that "the real subject of the Prologue is not the revelation of the Logos, who also at last received form in the person of Jesus Christ. Rather the reverse: the Logos, who was in the Beginning, who was with God and was Himself God, is discussed under the point of view of that which has taken place in Jesus Christ and has been seen and heard in Him. In a word: Jesus Christ is, in essence, the subject of the Prologue, the Logos the predicate. And not the reverse." Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 106-107, and Cullmann, *Christology*, 250, talk about the action of Jesus as the Logos in the world before incarnation.

<sup>908</sup> Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:259: "The world is called the domain (cf. Ezra 5:47 LXX; Lk 18:28; Jn 8:44) of the Logos, because it belongs to him by his creating it and is ordained to him as the world of man."

<sup>909</sup> See Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 157-158.

<sup>910</sup> Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 183: the fact that Jesus replaced the water in the purification jars refers to the fact that Jesus "has superseded the Torah"—already referred to in the Prologue—, "a continuation of the hidden critique . . . against the current Jewish understanding of Sophia's embodiment in the Torah," a point which is "explicit in the later wisdom school" (Sir 15:1-8; 24:23ff; Wis 6:18; Bar 3:36; 4:4). See also Dillon, "Wisdom Tradition," 287; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:523; Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 82-86.

<sup>911</sup> Paul N. Anderson, *The Christology of the Fourth Gospel: Its Unity and Disunity in the Light of John 6*, WUNT 2/78 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996), 181, emphasizes that in John the narratives of walking on the sea and multiplying the bread are not only instances when Jesus' power over nature is seen, but of "revelation, which involves the initiatory and saving action of God's dialogue with humanity." See also the miraculous catch of fish in 20:1-14. For walking of the sea, see also the article of Gail R. O'Day, "John 6:15-21: Jesus Walking on Water as Narrative Embodiment of Johannine Christology," in Culpepper, *Critical Readings of John 6*, 149-159, who calls the scene of walking on the water a theophany.

<sup>912</sup> Koester, *The Word of Life*, 35, says that "the signs reveal power in ways that give life." See also Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 21.

καὶ ἐκ τῆς γῆς λαλεῖ.

ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἐρχόμενος [ἐπάνω πάντων ἐστίν].<sup>913</sup> (3:31).

The chiastic structure perceives οὐρανός, the heavenly realm<sup>914</sup> as ἄνωθεν, above (8:23). If the reality of God is above, the earth, γῆ, κόσμος (6:14; 8:23; 9:39; 11:27; 16:28a; 18:37)<sup>915</sup> or τὰ πάντα is κάτω, below (8:23<sup>916</sup>). Heaven and earth differ in nature and quality. Above is the realm of the transcendent, spiritual and everything related to God (1:1, 18; 3:3, 5, 13, 31; 8:23; 14:2, 28). The earth below is the place of human beings, of the material (3:3-6).<sup>917</sup> The qualities of the heavenly and earthly realm will be discussed throughout the chapter on John. It is important, though, to discuss some of the qualities in this section as well in order to see what separates man from God, how those who belong to below can enter the above, and what is the meaning of entering the above in relation to eternal life. I shall, however, note that I only discuss these metaphors inasmuch as it is needed for the understanding of the way the cosmos and life are structured.

Due to its created nature, the earth differs qualitatively from heaven (3:3, 5-6, 12, 31; 8:15; 18:36).<sup>918</sup> Accordingly, man is limited in his relation with the divine: τὸ γεγεννημένον ἐκ τῆς

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<sup>913</sup> The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks about earthly things. The one who comes from heaven is above all.

<sup>914</sup> We shall use the term *divine* or *heavenly realm* or *above/up* to refer to the realm of God instead of the *Kingdom of God*, since the latter has strong soteriological overtones; it is rather a metaphor of salvation.

<sup>915</sup> See also the other references to the sending of Jesus into the world, 3:17a; 10:36; 17:18; also 1:9; 3:19; 12:46.

<sup>916</sup> See other texts also that describe Jesus' coming into and being in the world.

<sup>917</sup> See van der Watt, *Introduction*, 31; Kysar, *John the Maverick Gospel*, 75-76. Koester, *The Word of Life*, 55: man is said to be σὰρξ (17:2), flesh that is not inherently evil, καρδιά, heart (14:1) and ψυχή (12:27), better translated as *self* because "John does not work with a dualistic view of human beings, which distinguishes the mortal flesh from an immortal soul."

<sup>918</sup> Van der Watt, *Introduction*, 30: "John's narrative is based on a particular view of reality that is dualistic." And he goes on: "The essence of this dualism is based on the God that existed before creation. He created everything that exists through the Word (1.1-3). This resulted in a definite and qualitative contrast between Creator and created" (*Introduction*, 30). However, van der Watt, *Introduction*, 30, also notes that this contrast that is often called dualism "is not an exact dualism" since the heavenly qualities are not equal, but "far superior to the earthly qualities." See also Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 89; Ridderbos, *The Gospel of John*, 47-48; cf. Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 29-31.

σαρκὸς σὰρξ ἐστίν, καὶ τὸ γεγεννημένον ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος πνεῦμά ἐστιν (3:6).<sup>919</sup> The creational contrast, however, does not exclude the possibility of being part of the realm of God,<sup>920</sup> since human beings can be “born from above” and thus be part of it (1:12-13; 3:3, 5). The creational contrast, therefore, does not imply a dichotomy: human beings can be part of the two worlds, the earthly world and that of God (or of the devil<sup>921</sup>) at the same time. The creation itself points to eternal life: ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν<sup>922</sup> (1:4a).<sup>923</sup> As the result of relating life to light in 1:4b, it becomes evident that ζωὴ in 1:4 probably does not only refer to natural life but to eternal life as well. Thus, the Logos is seen giving not only physical life, but also eternal life.<sup>924</sup> The text also lets us perceive life as an entity, the gift of God that can be given and revealed.

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<sup>919</sup> What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. See Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:382. See also 3:12, 31.

<sup>920</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 184: σὰρξ in the Gospel is not necessarily evil, but it may simply indicate “humanness” (see 1:14 where it is linked to Jesus). Van der Watt continues: “σὰρξ and eternal life do not clash . . . In σὰρξ (being human) they receive life” (*Family of the King*, 184 n. 114).

<sup>921</sup> See below the discussion on the devil’s relation to earth and humanity.

<sup>922</sup> In him was life.

<sup>923</sup> Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:7, 26-27: eternal life is meant in 1:4a. However, Newman and Nida, *A Translator’s Handbook*, 11, says that if “one understands life in terms of a particular quality of life, and not mere existence, there seems to be no special shift of meaning in verse 4. Otherwise, the first occurrence of life would refer to physical life, while the second occurrence would certainly indicate a quality of life which enlightens men.” We agree that the verse may refer to both physical and eternal life, though it may not be in the way Newman and Nida suggests, but that the first occurrence already includes both connotations due to its context. Hans-Ulrich Weidemann, “The Victory of Protology over Eschatology? Creation in the Gospel of John,” in Nicklas and Zamfir, *Theologies of Creation*, 309, says with regard to 1:4 that “a distinction between ‘psychological (biological) life’ and ‘true (eternal) life’ is still foreign to the ancient ‘hymn’”; however, we have to consider that the focus of the hymn is 1:12 (becoming the children of God), and as Weidemann previously mentioned (“The Victory of Protology over Eschatology?,” 303), “this new existence goes far beyond merely being created.” Weidemann, “The Victory of Protology over Eschatology?,” 303-304, also believes that this may be the reason why the verb γίνομαι is used both in 1:3 and 1:12: “the creation statement in v. 3 stands in the service of the salvation statements of v. 11f., 14 and 16. . . . salvation becomes the realization of the goal of creation.”

<sup>924</sup> Beasley-Murray, *John*, 11: “The Logos is Mediator not only in the act of creation, but in its continuance. Hence ζωὴ (life) and φῶς (light) include the life and light which comes to man in *both* creation *and* new creation. Our Gospel emphasizes the latter aspect, since it is concerned with the saving action of the Logos-Son for humankind, but the new creative work presupposes the original creative action of the Logos and is its goal.” Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:646, notes that the idea of continuous creation was present in Jewish thought: “Yet the rabbis also recognized that God daily renewed his work of creation; in miracles God could continue to create after finishing the creation; he continues to matchmake, thereby sustaining his creation. . . . Others, like Philo, emphasized that though God rested on the seventh day, this means only that his activity requires no labor; he never ceases from his activity, because creation continues to depend on him.” On this topic, see also the footnote on v. 5:17.

The creational contrast also includes contrasting times: as it was illustrated above, the concepts linked to God and the heavenly realm are pre-existence (1:1; 8:57-58; 17:5, 24) and eternal life (5:26; 6:57; 11:25-26),<sup>925</sup> while the timeframe of creation is linked to the concept of time and motion, thus, conveying limitedness (11:25).<sup>926</sup> Cosmic time has a beginning (1:3; 8:57-58; 17:5, 24). These contrasting categories also illustrate why human beings need to belong to above in order to have eternal life: whatever belongs to human world is limited and finite. Καίρως (7:6, 8) is linked to Jesus,<sup>927</sup> and it has Christological, eschatological and soteriological connotation;<sup>928</sup> it also refers to the meeting point between earthly time and eternity, the point when the divine, and with it, eternity steps into human life, i.e. the moment of salvation.<sup>929</sup> The association of the terms in the context lets us see the distinctive timeframes of God and creation. God's eternity is presented as a continuous existence, a *presence*, involving no beginning, no end, and no change, while the existence of the earth is linked to the notions of time, movement and change.<sup>930</sup>

The creational contrast illustrates that human limitation needs to be opened up to the spiritual reality in order to belong to above; man needs spiritual existence in order to be part of the spiritual world (3:3-5),<sup>931</sup> and this spiritual existence, this new life can be received from the

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<sup>925</sup> Weidemann, who argues that eternal life cannot be distinguished from biological life in the hymn, says that later in the Gospel the Evangelist distinguishes eternal life from the "general biblical notion of life" and the former is "shifted to the divine side represented by God, the Logos and the Spirit" ("The Victory of Protology over Eschatology?," 309). Thus, "when 'life' is radically linked to God resp. to Christ and the Spirit, then a cosmos that closes itself off to God and to the one He has sent inevitably slips into the sphere of death" (Weidemann, "The Victory of Protology over Eschatology?," 312).

<sup>926</sup> See the references to Jesus' and Peter's death in 3:14; 8:28; 12:32, 34; 13:36.

<sup>927</sup> Χρόνος (5:6; 7:33; 12:35; 14:9) denotes *earthly time* or a *space in time*. For a more detailed discussion on the difference between καιρός and χρόνος, see James Barr, *Biblical Words for Time* (2nd ed.; SBT 33; London: SCM, 1969).

<sup>928</sup> H.-C. Hahn, "καιρός," *NIDNTT* 3:833-839. For other terms with eschatological and soteriological connotation, see νῦν in John 4:23; 5:25; 8:11, 40, 52; 9:21, 41; 12:27, 31\*2; 13:31, 36; 14:29; 15:22, 24; 16:5, 22, 29, 30; 17:5, 7, 13; ἄρτι in John 2:10; 5:17; 9:19, 25; 13:7, 19, 33, 37; 14:7; 16:12, 24, 31; ὥρα in John 2:4; 7:30; 8:20; 12:23, 27; 13:1; εὐθύς in John 13:30, 32; 19:30; εὐθέως in John 5:9; 6:21; 18:27.

<sup>929</sup> See Hahn, *NIDNTT* 3:837.

<sup>930</sup> Ramelli and Konstan, *Terms for Eternity*, 69: the eternity of God means eternity in the absolute sense whether it is expressed by αἰδιος or αἰώνιος. According to Guhrt, *NIDNTT* 3:830, although the references in John "cannot always be pinned down with absolute certainty of meaning . . . reveal a strong inclination to conceive of a timeless, because post-temporal, eternity." However, we note that eternity of God is seen not only post-temporal, but pre-temporal as well (see 1:1). See the terms related to eternity and their occurrences in the Introduction of the chapter on John.

<sup>931</sup> Van der Watt, *Introduction*, 31.

living God alone (6:57).<sup>932</sup> This is what Jesus' mission made possible for the world.<sup>933</sup> Salvation comes through him who created all things (10:7, 9; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1-7; also 4:10-14; 6:27-58).<sup>934</sup> The Word of God, whom we saw in the beginning with God (1:1-2), is the one who comes to the earth to reveal the divine life.<sup>935</sup> With the incarnation of the Word (1:14),<sup>936</sup> "the 'above' entered into the 'below' so that these two realities intersected in the person and work of Jesus."<sup>937</sup> This merging of the spiritual and earthly realities in Jesus opened up the divine for humankind<sup>938</sup> and made possible for humans to relate to the divine sphere.<sup>939</sup>

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<sup>932</sup> Koester, *The Word of Life*, 31: "God 'has life in himself,' which means that his life is not derived from any other source (5:26). God has life and God gives life. . . . Human beings, in contrast, do not have life in themselves. If they are to live they must receive life from God. This means that in John's Gospel life is understood relationally. To have life is to relate to the God who is the source of all life." See also Newman and Nida, *A Translator's Handbook*, 209, for ὁ ζῶν πατὴρ in 6:57.

<sup>933</sup> Weidemann, "The Victory of Protology over Eschatology?," 325: "Whereas the old Prologue-'Hymn' understood 'beginning' as a beginning in time, i.e. the starting point for a subsequent temporal continuum, and thus speaks of something which happened in the *past*, the Evangelist overlays the event of cross and resurrection with Gen 2 and thus withdraws the creation account from the past, for the bringing to life of human beings takes place in the evening assembly of the disciples on Easter Sunday –the first of an endless series of Sunday assemblies that reaches up to the present time of the hearers of the Gospel."

<sup>934</sup> Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:25: "All that is created is intimately related to the Word, for it was created, not only through him, but also in him. . . . The same unity that exists between the Word and his creation will be applied in John xv 5 to Jesus and the Christian: 'Apart from me you can do nothing.'"

<sup>935</sup> Koester, *The Word of Life*, 29: "But here is the complicating factor. For communication [with God] to take place, people must receive what is essentially different (the Word of God) in what is essentially the same as themselves (the flesh). In Jesus, people meet someone who is as human as they are, yet he claims to have come from God and to address them with God's own authority. This provokes a new issue. In the eyes of many people, Jesus seems too human to have come from God. . . . This irony is central to John's Gospel: God reaches across the barrier that separates him from human beings by sending his Word in human form; yet this human form becomes a new barrier, since many people see only the human Jesus and cannot comprehend that he is from God (1:10-11)."

<sup>936</sup> Kysar, *John the Maverick Gospel*, 44: "The boldest of the claims for Christ is embodied in *incarnational Christology*. In this way of conceiving of Christ, some form of his prior existence is asserted. He is thought to have existed before his appearance as a man in this world. This is equal in importance to and logically necessitated by the central theme of incarnational Christology: the divine being has become a human person." He also adds that the Prologue is "the fullest and clearest statement of incarnational Christology in the New Testament" (*John the Maverick Gospel*, 44).

<sup>937</sup> Van der Watt, *Introduction*, 30.

<sup>938</sup> Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 128: The scene in 1:51 "evokes another scene from the story of Jacob: his dream at Bethel of the ladder from heaven to earth and the angels descending and ascending (Gen 28:12). The effect of this allusion to Scripture is to affirm that Jesus is the new Bethel, the new meeting place between heaven and earth."

<sup>939</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 180-181 n. 96, notes the parallel between 1:14 and 1:12-13: in the former verse the Logos starts living as "flesh," whereas in the latter the believer "starts to exist on divine level"; in both cases the person becomes "something he was not previously."

Θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακεν πώποτε·  
 μονογενὴς θεὸς  
 ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς  
 ἐκεῖνος ἐξηγήσατο<sup>940</sup> (1:18).

“The sentence Θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακεν πώποτε denies that God is directly accessible to men. At the same time it assumes that it is natural for man to wish to see God and to be able to approach him.”<sup>941</sup> “We have here in a radical form the oriental and OT idea of the sovereignty and absoluteness of God.”<sup>942</sup> Dunn says that 1:18 “serves as the connecting link, uniting the claim that Christ is both (the incarnation of) the Logos God and the only Son of the Father.”<sup>943</sup> The communion of the Word and God (1:1-2) is now presented as the communion of the Son and the Father.<sup>944</sup> This terminology also leads to activate a metaphorical framework in which eternal life is conceived as life within the family of God.<sup>945</sup> Consequently, it becomes obvious that the term

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<sup>940</sup> No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

<sup>941</sup> Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 80.

<sup>942</sup> Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 81. Keener, *The Gospel of John*, notes that although Jewish, and even some Greek and Roman, sources proclaimed the invisibility of God (1:422-423), “some Jewish sources, however, indicate an eschatological vision of God. John may thus imply that Jesus’ coming represented the eschatological revelation, the ultimate and climactic revelation of God’s character” (1:424).

<sup>943</sup> Dunn, *Christology*, 244. See also Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:280. Beasley-Murray, *John*, 25: the expression “‘Son of God’ was more prevalent in Judaism than has generally been allowed.” See Exod 4:22f; 2 Sam 7:14; Sir 4:10; Wis 2:18; Jub. 1:24. Beasley-Murray, *John*, 26, also notes that the “differentiation between the expression applied prior to and after the ministry of the Revealer is clear, but the significance of the confession is equally evident: the Jews, the Church, the contemporary movement of John the Baptist, the world itself are called on to listen to the witness of the last of the prophets of the old order: Jesus is *the* Son of God!” Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:36: contrary to all the prophets of OT, Jesus has seen God and he is in an everlasting communion with him; that only the Son has seen the Father was probably “part of the Johannine polemic against the Synagogue, for it is repeated in v 37 and vi 46.”

<sup>944</sup> The family language also expresses that it is the Father who is the highest authority in the family (John 14:28). Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:25: “The recognition of a humble position for Jesus Christ in relation to the Father is not strange to early Christian hymns.” Brown also mentions that if De Aulsebrook’s idea (that throughout the Prologue the “Word” means “the Word-become-flesh”) is correct, then “there is justification for seeing in the use of the anarthrous *theos* something more humble than the use of *ho theos* for the Father” (*The Gospel according to John*, 1:25). However, 1:1 does not necessarily refer to the Incarnated Word, since it is exactly the pre-existent and pre-incarnate state with the Father upon which Jesus claims authority to speak on behalf of the Father. Then the “humbleness” of the Word compared with the Father can be seen in function alone (it is the Father who sends and whom the Word obeys) and not in nature. For Jesus’ obedience to the Father, see also Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 244-245; Beasley-Murray, *John*, 79; Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 327-332.

<sup>945</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 204-207.

son is not used in an ordinary sense: Jesus is the unique Son of God (1:18),<sup>946</sup> the Holy One of God (6:69).<sup>947</sup> The family language displays the close relationship between God and Jesus (5:20),<sup>948</sup> and the authenticity of Jesus' revelation. The communion of Jesus with God is mentioned in several places as *seeing* or *hearing* the Father (3:11, 31-32; 5:19, 30, 37; 6:46; 8:26, 28, 38, 40, 47; 12:49; 15:15).<sup>949</sup> Because of the metaphorical structuring KNOWING IS SEEING,<sup>950</sup> we understand that the fact that Jesus sees God means that he knows him.<sup>951</sup> This makes him capable of revealing God in such a way as it hasn't been done before (1:18)<sup>952</sup>—this is the ἀλήθεια mentioned in 1:14, 1:17; 8:31-32, 40.<sup>953</sup> Through Jesus' revelation<sup>954</sup> God is made visible for humanity:

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<sup>946</sup> Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:13: μονογενής is literally “of a single [*monos*] kind [*genos*].” Brown goes on (1:13): “there is little Greek justification for the translation of *monogenēs* as ‘only begotten’; it rather means *unique* since it does not refer to *procession*, but to the “quality of Jesus.” Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:425: “The intimate connection between Father and Son is not only relational, but in terms of their shared nature and similar role.” Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 82, notes about μονογενής in 1:18: “Its use here on the one hand brings out the character of the revelation as an event which springs out of the divine love (3.16; I Jn. 4.9), and on the other hand it stresses the absoluteness and sufficiency of the revelation, because the Revealer as the Son of the divine love stands in perfect communion with the Father.”

<sup>947</sup> See Ridderbos, *The Gospel of John*, 249-250. This term is similarly linked to wisdom (see Wis 1:5; 7:22; 9:10, 17; 10:10).

<sup>948</sup> Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 82: ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς emphasizes the “perfect communion” of the Father and Son.

<sup>949</sup> Some scholars deny any concept of pre-existence in the patterns which tell about the Son's seeing and hearing the Father; seeing and hearing, according to them, refers to earthly seeing and hearing. See the list of scholars in William Loader, *The Christology of the Fourth Gospel: Structure and Issues*, 2nd ed., BBET 23 (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1992), 259 n. 88. On the contrary, we agree with Loader, *Christology*, 150-151, that the texts referring to hearing and seeing must be seen “in the context of coming and being sent” (see 6:33, 38). The Son who has seen the Father (1:18) has come to reveal him. When Jesus is speaking about having seen or heard (or having been taught by) the Father, the texts refer to pre-existence, not to a past, present or future event on earth. With this we do not deny that certain references in the Gospel refer to the earthly communion of Jesus with the Father, but the point is that the Gospel also asserts the unity of the Father and Son in the pre-existence and exaltation.

<sup>950</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:247: “vision functioned as a natural metaphor and analogy for knowing.”

<sup>951</sup> This metaphor is strong in 14:7a and 14:9 where both knowing and seeing is mentioned.

<sup>952</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:424: “For Jesus to ‘make God known’ implies more than communicating a visual image; the term suggests that Jesus fully interprets God, confirming the sense of the context: Jesus unveils God's character absolutely.” See also 3:13, 34; 5:37; 7:29; 8:19, 26, 38, 55; 10:15; 12:45; 14:7-11; 15:15; chap. 17.

<sup>953</sup> Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 177: ἀλήθεια denotes “eternal reality as revealed to men—either the reality itself or the revelation of it.” And, as Bennema, *The Power of Saving Wisdom*, 121-122, says this is “saving truth.”

<sup>954</sup> The revelatory function is emphasized over the atoning function; see Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 94-95; *Introduction*, 56-57; Paul N. Anderson, “Why This Study Is Needed, and Why It Is Needed Now,” in *Critical*

εἰ ἐγνώκατέ με,  
καὶ τὸν πατέρα μου γνώσεσθε.  
καὶ ἅπ' ἄρτι γινώσκετε αὐτὸν  
καὶ ἐώρακατε αὐτόν.<sup>955</sup> (14:7).

As van der Watt describes, Jesus' words have performative effects (6:63<sup>956</sup>): by revealing God and his life, Jesus can communicate this life to the believers. By implication then, "true hearing" implies believing, understanding and acceptance as well (5:24); this is how the words have effect on the believers. This effect is permanent; the words "abide in you" (15:7). The pronouncement and acceptance of the words of Jesus sets up a communion between Jesus and the believers, and this communion is life. That is why it can be said that the words are *life* (6:63).<sup>957</sup> Thus, revelation and life giving are actually different aspects of the same mission: Jesus reveals God and eternal life, and by revealing it he opens up the heavenly realm for all those who believe. The metaphors that conceived of these two aspects of Jesus mission are: Jesus is life (1:3-4; 11:25; 14:6)<sup>958</sup> and Jesus is light (1:4-9; 3:19; 8:12; also 9:5).<sup>959</sup> Again, identifying Jesus with life means that Jesus lives and makes us live. The metaphor JESUS IS LIGHT maps the source domain light into the target domain Jesus (1:4-9; 3:19-21; 8:12; 9:5; 12:35-36, 46). Thus here we have to understand light non-metaphorically that is as an entity that contributes to life, makes us feel good, allows us to see<sup>960</sup> and gain knowledge.<sup>961</sup> The strength of light is expressed in 1:5

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*Appraisals of Critical Views*, ed. Paul N. Anderson, Felix Just and Tom Thatcher, vol. 1 of *John, Jesus, and History*, ed. Paul N. Anderson, Felix Just and Tom Thatcher, SBLSymS 44 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 39.

<sup>955</sup> If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.

<sup>956</sup> Paralleling the idea of Wis 16:12; see Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, lv.

<sup>957</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 225-227. See Newman and Nida, *A Translator's Handbook*, 157-158; Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 259-260.

<sup>958</sup> See more about this metaphor at the discussion of the living water and bread.

<sup>959</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 236 n. 402, notes that Bultmann (see *The Gospel of John*, 42) suggests that life and light are synonyms in 1:4. On the contrary, van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 236, emphasizes that life and light are "metaphors in their own right." Note that light has many connotations in the Gospel: it is both a metaphor for life and revelation; see Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 42-43; Koester, *The Word of Life*, 189-190; cf. Petersen, *Sociology*, 72-109.

<sup>960</sup> Light exposes things.

<sup>961</sup> This non-metaphorical meaning of light is explained in Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 58.



against darkness.<sup>962</sup> Light in 3:19-21 appears as the context of judgment; Jesus as light exposes both the evil deeds and the deeds “done in God” (see also 1:9-12).<sup>963</sup> He is the true light (1:9)<sup>964</sup> compared to John the Baptist who is referred to as “a burning and shining lamp” in 5:35. This may express the strength of the revelation of John the Baptist in this context, but also the temporariness of his light (πρὸς ὥραν)<sup>965</sup> if we understand the statement via LIFE IS LIGHT and LIFE IS HEAT.<sup>966</sup> “Burning and shining” recalls the image of the fire that extinguishes, and so it describes human condition that is limited. Once Jesus appears, this light has to fade (3:30). Jesus’ revelation overshadows that of John since he is the unique son of God (1:18), eternal and all-powerful in acts and revelation. John himself points to Jesus as the true and everlasting light (1:5-9).

The eternal Word of God comes from above down to earth to bring eternal life to human beings. Through Jesus salvific mission we do not only understand the reality and characteristics of God, but we also understand human life. Jesus’ earthly life is viewed via the metaphors LIFE IS BEING

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<sup>962</sup> For the possible meanings and interpretations, see Newman and Nida, *A Translator’s Handbook*, 12; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:8; Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 46-48; Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:246. Κατέλαβεν can mean *to understand* or *believe*, just like in 1:10, 11 (for this reading, see Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:246; Beasley-Murray, *John*, 11), or *to overcome*. This latter sense is taken by Harris, *The Origin of the Prologue*, 43, who sees the connection with Wis (cf. 7:29-30), and Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, 87, who argues that this meaning is present in 12:35 as well: “This suggests a background in Wis. 7.29f.: ‘Compared with light she [wisdom] is found to be superior, for it is succeeded by the night, but against wisdom evil does not prevail.’ This supports the second meaning, as adopted in the text. Whereas the light, having once shone in the beginning, shines continuously (hence the present tense), there has never been an occasion when it was completely extinguished.” Again this sense is underlined by van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 256-257. Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:27, interprets this sentence, too, in the context of Gen account; nonetheless the fall, man still has “a ray of hope” for eternal life due to Jesus.

<sup>963</sup> See Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 191. Beasley-Murray, *John*, 12: the true light (1:9) “illuminates the existence of every man (positively *and* negatively, for salvation and judgment; see 3:19-21).”

<sup>964</sup> Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 131-132: light and life were characteristic elements of both OT and Hellenistic thought. See Witherington, *John’s Wisdom*, 157-158, for light and life in wisdom literature.

<sup>965</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:657: “Handheld Herodian lamps, which could quickly deplete their oil, were no match for the brilliance of celestial lights. . . . Jewish tradition had already emphasized that Elijah’s message came burning like a lamp (ὡς λαμπὰς ἐκαίετο, Sir 48:1), which is probably in view here.” See also Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:224.

<sup>966</sup> For the relationship between these metaphors, see Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 87-88. See more about these metaphors at the discussion on earthly life.

PRESENT HERE (1:14; 17:11),<sup>967</sup> DEATH IS DEPARTURE TO A FINAL DESTINATION (14:2-4),<sup>968</sup> and LIFE IS A JOURNEY (12:35).<sup>969</sup> This understanding of his earthly life shows that his presence on earth, like the lives of all human beings, is limited (17:11). The metaphors, however, also underline the idea of Jesus proceeding towards the accomplishment of his mission. In 1:18 we can see the Word εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς, close to the Father's heart again.<sup>970</sup> 1:1-18, thus, can be read as presenting the circular movement of the Word: descending from the Father,<sup>971</sup> revealing the Father on earth,<sup>972</sup> and going back to the Father.<sup>973</sup> This conception of Jesus'

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<sup>967</sup> Kysar, *John the Maverick Gospel*, 45: in 1:14 "the verb translated 'lived' (Greek *eskenosen*) literally means something like 'put up camp [or 'tented'] for a while.' The implication is that the Logos is on a journey and camps out in this world for a time as a part of his itinerary."

<sup>968</sup> See Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 381. For a contrary opinion, see Martinus C. de Boer, "Jesus' Departure to the Father in John: Death or Resurrection?," in Van Belle, van der Watt and Maritz, *Theology and Christology in the Fourth Gospel*, 1-19. De Boer argues that, although death (as well as resurrection) is presupposed by the terms *going/return to the Father* or *departure*, they primarily refer to the resurrection/ascension of Jesus to the Father. We do not fully agree with that, though. De Boer is right when he emphasizes the aspect of ascension and that Jesus' ascension happens via the cross. He is also right that *return to the Father* and *departure* cannot be equated with death, but, I believe, this is precisely because they perceive one aspect of death, namely that *death is departure to a final destination with the direction of ascent* (see also the section that discusses ALIVE IS UP for scholars who understand *lifting up* as part of the process of Jesus' returning to the Father). Thus the metaphor would not only presuppose death, but death is its target concept.

<sup>969</sup> Adele Reinhartz, *The Word in the World: The Cosmological Tale in the Fourth Gospel*, SBLMS 45 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 19, notes that the Gospel uses "spatial language which echoes the spatial relationships set out in the prologue. In the prologue, the world is the place with reference to which the Word's activities are described. The Word moves from a location outside of the world, into the world, and then out again. The body of the Gospel contains many similar spatial references, particularly in the discourse sections. These include the contrast between above and below (3:31; 8:23), heaven and earth (3:12-13, 31), ascent and descent (3:13)."

<sup>970</sup> Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 151: the "ascent is itself one of the unbelievable ἐπουράνια" mentioned in 3:12—an opinion also shared by Beasley-Murray, *John*, 50.

<sup>971</sup> See also 3:13, 31; 5:43; 6:33, 38; 7:29; 8:42; 12:49; 13:3; 16:28; 17:7f ; 18:37 for descent, and 3:13; 6:62; 7:33-34; 8:14, 21; 13:3, 33, 36; 14:2-4, 28; 16:5, 10, 28; 20:17 for ascent.

<sup>972</sup> Stephen Motyer, *Your Father the Devil? A New Approach to John and "the Jews,"* PBTM (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1997), 46: "The presentation of Jesus as the Revealer draws not just on prophetic and Wisdom traditions but also on apocalyptic and 'heavenly journey' traditions."

<sup>973</sup> See R. Alan Culpepper, "The Pivot of John's Prologue," *NTS* 27 (1980): 1-17, for the chiasmic structure of the Prologue. There is a contradictory opinion that reading 1:1 and 1:18 as reference to the descent-ascent of the Son of God is a misunderstanding. Beasley-Murray, *John*, 4, argues that the passage actually refers to "the unity of the Logos with God and his role as the instrument of God in the act of creation; in that capacity *he remains active within the created order*, and the source of life in the world. . . . the assertion in v 18 most naturally relates to the authoritative revelation of the Father given by the Incarnate Son. Since he is ever 'in the bosom of the Father.'" Beasley-Murray, *John*, 16, however, accepts that although the "prime reference is to the relationship to God of the Son in his life of flesh and blood, but it naturally extends to his pre-existent and post-Resurrection relationship to the Father." Cf. Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:224;

mission again shows eternal life in terms of spatial orientation. Further, it makes us understand how Jesus' journey opens up the divine for humankind.<sup>974</sup> His journey is the pattern upon which the life of humankind is designed. Human beings have to follow him in order to reach the same final location (14:2-4),<sup>975</sup> to be part of the divine realm and have eternal life (10:9; 11:9-10; 12:35)<sup>976</sup>—eternal life is perceived as a destination here.<sup>977</sup> And what is more interesting, in the metaphorical construction that perceives human life in terms of journey, Jesus becomes the way that leads to life: ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ ὁδὸς καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια καὶ ἡ ζωὴ (14:6).

What we have understood about life up to now is that eternal life is related to God and Jesus, and life is the quality of the communion with God. Further, receiving life is based on the relation with Jesus. The analysis of Jesus' mission in terms of orientational metaphors also reveals that eternal life is structured in terms of the domain up, i.e. receiving life means being part of the above, of God's realm. We also mentioned other aspects of life that we discuss later in details: life is presence and destination, and life is perceived as an entity that can be given and received.

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Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, 99. We agree that 1:18 stresses the idea of the authority of the Son on the basis of his unity with God, but it also emphasizes that the basis of his authority is exactly his being with the Father in pre-existence and after (see Loader, *Christology*, 153). Moreover, since the Word existed in the realm of God before creation, similarly to God, he is outside the creation, transcendent; as Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 32, says, in Jesus one encounters "the reality that lies beyond the world and time." Therefore it is meaningful to read 1:14 as descent. Moreover, the orientational metaphors rule out the presupposition that 1:1, 18 is only about the unity of Jesus with God. Since life belongs to the realm of above, Jesus descends from above to bring life to humankind, and human beings have to ascend in order to have life; see Loader, *Christology*, 151. Loader, *Christology*, 152, also notes that the two texts that make exceptions to the "normal pattern" of seeing and hearing are in present tense (5:19f, 30); they do not refer to the "acquisition of knowledge to be imparted, using the revealer envoy model, but rather to the Son's ability to judge as the Father judges or to act in accordance with his will. This sounds similar, but it is a different model." For the revealer envoy model, see Loader, *Christology*.

<sup>974</sup> Craig R. Koester, "Jesus as the Way to the Father in Johannine Theology (John 14, 6)," in Van Belle, van der Watt and Maritz, *Theology and Christology in the Fourth Gospel*, 117-133.

<sup>975</sup> See Bennema, *The Power of Saving Wisdom*, 114.

<sup>976</sup> The metaphors related to earthly life are discussed in more detail below.

<sup>977</sup> See more about this in the discussion about life as presence and destination.

### 3.1.1.2 Kingship

The Kingdom of God is mentioned only in John 3:3, 5:

ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω σοι,

ἐὰν μή τις γεννηθῇ ἄνωθεν,

οὐ δύναται ἰδεῖν τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ.

. . .

ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω σοι,

ἐὰν μή τις γεννηθῇ ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος,

οὐ δύναται εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ.<sup>978</sup>

The Kingdom of God appears as a soteriological concept,<sup>979</sup> rather than a cosmological one. Schnackenburg, however, says that it is the divine realm pictured in 3:3, 5 “to which the divine envoy leads.”<sup>980</sup> The Kingdom of God, indeed, may include this notion as well;<sup>981</sup> however, the context strengthens the idea of salvation.<sup>982</sup> The association of kingdom with *birth out of God*, *water* and *spirit* in the immediate context suggests a soteriological reading of kingdom that is receiving a new life in the family of God.<sup>983</sup> The realm of God appears as a cosmological entity depicted as the above, but kingdom rather refers to salvation in John.<sup>984</sup> The spatial sense,

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<sup>978</sup> Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above. . . . Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit.

<sup>979</sup> See Ziener, “Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium,” 37; van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 376-378; Koester, *The Word of Life*, 64; George Eldon Ladd, *Jesus and the Kingdom: The Eschatology of Biblical Realism* (London: SPCK, 1966); George Eldon Ladd, “The Kingdom of God—Reign or Realm?” *JBL* 81 (1962): 230-238; “βασιλεύω, βασιλεία,” L&N, ad loc.

<sup>980</sup> Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:366-367.

<sup>981</sup> Cf. Wis 5:5; 6:14b; 8:3; 9:4a; 10:10, where the Kingdom of God appears as a place where God lives with angels, and wisdom is sitting at his throne.

<sup>982</sup> Anderson, “Why This Study Is Needed,” 23: “God’s present-and-ultimate reign” contrasted to both religious and political powers.

<sup>983</sup> Koester, *The Word of Life*, 64: “The ‘kingdom of God’ is another way of speaking about the life in relationship with God that is depicted later in this chapter (3:14-18).” Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 377: both “birth of God” and “becoming part of the kingdom” “describe a salvific relation between God and his followers.”

<sup>984</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:537, sees link with Wis 10:10, also noted by Peder Borgen, “God’s Agent in the Fourth Gospel,” in *Religions in Antiquity: Essays in Memory of Erwin Ramsdell Goodenough*, ed. Jacob Neusner, SHR 14 (Leiden: Brill, 1968; repr., 1970), 146 n. 3; Coloe, *Dwelling in the Household of God*, 74-75. Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:537 n. 35, also notes: “If Wisdom alludes to Gen 28:12, the revelation of Jacob’s ladder, it might also evoke the image of a conduit of revelation between heaven and earth.”

however, has a word in 3:3,<sup>985</sup> since ἄνωθεν also defines the origins of birth as from above, from God's realm or God.<sup>986</sup>

Since the requirement to enter the Kingdom of God is perceived in terms of birth, this leads us to another metaphorical domain where the Kingdom of God can be replaced by the image of life in a family. The metaphorical structuring that views salvation related to the Kingdom of God is combined with the metaphor of receiving life in the family of God resulting in the conception of salvation as life in the family of God,<sup>987</sup> “as child of a king.”<sup>988</sup>

By referring to the Kingdom of God, the text implicitly calls God *King*.<sup>989</sup> Although God is mainly called Father, the royal metaphor can be seen in the instances when God's power is stated; God has power over creation,<sup>990</sup> in salvation and judgment,<sup>991</sup> and his power even overcomes that of the devil.<sup>992</sup> Jesus fulfils on behalf of the Father the role of the eschatological king<sup>993</sup> and judge<sup>994</sup> who gives life and condemns (5:21-23; 12:50).<sup>995</sup> He is ὃν ἀπέστειλεν ὁ

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<sup>985</sup> Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:367-368, relates 3:3 with 3:31, saying that the text speaks of “the divine and heavenly world, by whose powers man must be renewed.” Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:538-539, notes that both Jewish and Greek thinkers were familiar with “vertical dualism” and John's audience would have also understood it in this sense. Coloe, *Dwelling in the Household of God*, 79, also says referring to 3:7-8 that ἄνωθεν “probably has the spatial sense,” born of the Spirit that was sent from above. However, we should not forget that the new life of the believers is also hinted at in 3:3; so ἄνωθεν probably means both *above* and *anew*. See Newman and Nida, *A Translator's Handbook*, 81; see also our discussion on “birth of God” below.

<sup>986</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:539.

<sup>987</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 174-178, 376-377.

<sup>988</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 174.

<sup>989</sup> See van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 376, although he notes that the Gospel develops the theme of kingship more in relation to Jesus (6:15; 12:12-15; 18:36-37).

<sup>990</sup> Thompson, *The God of the Gospel of John*, 137, says that creation points to God's sovereignty.

<sup>991</sup> See at the creatorship of God and the discussion on judgment.

<sup>992</sup> God has power over all, even over the devil and his children. Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 212, notes that in the metaphorical framework of the family there is a “twist,” since the father of one family does not have influence on another family, but here the context provides the explanation: God is not only a father, but also a king (3:5, 8), a creator king, “who places all creation under his [Jesus'] jurisdiction.”

<sup>993</sup> Anderson, “Why This Study Is Needed,” 23, notes that the references “focus largely on the βασιλεύς, Jesus, rather than on the βασιλεία, the kingdom.” See also Brown, *Introduction*, 229.

<sup>994</sup> See the section on judgment below.

<sup>995</sup> Beasley-Murray, *John*, 76, says that the “emphasis . . . throughout the Gospel, is on the divine will for the salvation of the world, not its condemnation (cf. 3:16-21).”

θεός<sup>996</sup> (3:34),<sup>997</sup> and the Father places “all things in his hands” (3:35-36; 13:3).<sup>998</sup> He has power and authority over all (14:30; 16:33; 17:2; 19:11). He is the Messiah King (1:41, 49),<sup>999</sup> an intermediary between God and humans. His coming to earth exposes the two opposing ethical groups and sets judgment on them: the believers and unbelievers (1:12).<sup>1000</sup> The other features of kingship also appear in the Gospel: we can grasp protection (10:28-29),<sup>1001</sup> provision (6:27; 4:12-14; 15:1-8)<sup>1002</sup> and benevolence (God sent Jesus to all—3:16-17).<sup>1003</sup> The image of God as king is deeply related to his image as a father, as van der Watt says, “it is God, the Father, who is also the King.”<sup>1004</sup> This intertwining also appears in the instances of God’s provision of bread and salvation (6:32; 3:14); “references which could have been utilized within a king-nation context are mostly reinterpreted in familial perspective.”<sup>1005</sup> The kingship of God and Jesus refers to power in salvation and judgment, but this power has cosmological features as well: God and Jesus rule and judge (19:11; 12:31; 5:24), they provide people bread, water and vine (6:27; 4:12-14; 15:1-8). Jesus’ walking on the water (6:15-21), changing of water into wine (chap. 2),<sup>1006</sup> feeding of the multitude (chap. 6), as well as the scene in the olive garden (18:1-10) again disclose Jesus’ power over creation. Naturally, all these scenes have their soteriological

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<sup>996</sup> He whom God has sent.

<sup>997</sup> For *sending* see also 4:34; 5:30, 36-37; 6:29, 46, 57; 7:28-29; 8:26, 29, 42; 10:36; 11:41-42; 12:44; 14:24. For Jesus as the agent of God, see Borgen, “God’s Agent.”

<sup>998</sup> See Paul W. Meyer, “‘The Father’: The Presentation of God in the Fourth Gospel,” in *Exploring the Gospel of John: In Honor of D. Moody Smith*, ed. R. Alan Culpepper and C. Clifton Black (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1996), 255-273.

<sup>999</sup> See also 4:25, 29; 6:15; 7:26, 41; 9:22; 10:24; 11:27; 12:13, 34; 18:1-10, 36-37; 20:31. Although in 1:49; 6:15; 12:13 people refer to the earthly kingship of Jesus, there is irony behind the verses that points to the real kingship of Jesus; see van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 379.

<sup>1000</sup> See also Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 56-57.

<sup>1001</sup> For these aspects of kingship see also the discussion on the *hand of God, life as presence and love*.

<sup>1002</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:567, notes that “give” occurs 63 times in John. God gives to Jesus life, work, commands, authority, love, and “all things.” God gives to people his Son, life, law, authority, the Spirit, and whatever they ask in Jesus’ name. Jesus also appears as the giver of life, peace, God’s words, command, and authority.

<sup>1003</sup> Jerome H. Neyrey, *The Gospel of John*, NCBIC (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 306: “his [Jesus’] paramount benefaction is unique knowledge of God and God’s words (1:18). Yet he has also brokered: *inducement* (foods to eat and abundant wine to drink), *power* (healings and raising of the dead), *commitment* (beloved disciples, friends, vine for the branches), and *influence* (the Word who reveals God and God’s words).”

<sup>1004</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 378.

<sup>1005</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 380.

<sup>1006</sup> Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 183: the great amount of wine in John 2:1-11 points at the “*abundance* of Sophia’s provision,” cf., among all, Wis 7:11, 14.

connotation; they are all related to revelation<sup>1007</sup> and salvation.<sup>1008</sup> Nevertheless, they exhibit God's implication in the cosmos (12:31), and perceive God and Jesus the lord of all that was created.

The kingship metaphor, though not pertinently, also appears to define the relationship of man and God.<sup>1009</sup> The metaphorical construction that views salvation in terms of life in the family of God overshadows the kingship metaphor, but one should not forget that the believers that are born into the family of God become "the children of the King" (1:12-13; cf. 3:3, 5).<sup>1010</sup>

### 3.1.1.3 Birth out of God

The salvation God initiates consists in offering man the possibility of a new existence. But in order to come into possession of this new life, man that is limited in his nature and power needs spiritual rebirth.<sup>1011</sup> As it was said above, since entering the Kingdom of God is perceived in terms of birth (3:3, 5),<sup>1012</sup> the image of salvation can move from the Kingdom of God to the concept of eternal life: "Birth is the introduction to life and life is the consequence of birth. The metaphorical potential for developing the imagery in the direction of life within a family (with

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<sup>1007</sup> Anderson, *Christology*, 181: this exhibition of power is related to revelation in John.

<sup>1008</sup> Anderson, *Riddles*, 15: "From a theological perspective, Jesus is presented as fulfilling a typology; he is not simply a piece of bread, or a glimmer of light; he is *the* Bread of Life and *the* Light of the World. In that sense, each of these metaphors also serves a way of speaking about Jesus as the embodiment of the true Israel. John's Jesus is thus radically Jewish, in that he fulfills that of which Moses and the Prophets wrote (5:46)."

<sup>1009</sup> Van der Watt, "Working the Works of God," 138: "John uses a variety of concepts like filial imagery, the concepts of friendship, kingship, discipleship, and expressions such as 'staying or remaining in' (*Immanenzformeln*), to highlight the different aspects of the qualitative nature of the relationship between the Father, the Son, and the disciples from which behaviour is motivated and determined."

<sup>1010</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 381. For the judging role of the disciples, see below the discussion on BEING IN THE HAND OF GOD.

<sup>1011</sup> Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:382.

<sup>1012</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 161, observes that family language (father, son, children, birth, life, house), as well as certain motives combined with family language (love, teach, learn, protect, honour, ask) constitute "the most prominent" metaphorical network in John. Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 163: "By analogically linking widely accepted conventions from everyday life to what happens to the believer spiritually when he is born of God, receives eternal life, becomes a child of God, etc., John succeeds in utilizing established and generally accepted knowledge related to family life for understanding and explaining salvific and ethical events on a spiritual level. This analogy forms the basis of the metaphorical network which is established." Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 22-24, also notes that, however, there is qualitative difference between divine and earthly—the divine reality cannot totally be grasped by earthly terms; this results in a "semantic tension" in the metaphor.

God as Father) is therefore given with the reference to birth.”<sup>1013</sup> In this metaphorical framework,<sup>1014</sup> the relation between God, Jesus and the believers is viewed in terms of familial bonds,<sup>1015</sup> whereas salvation is viewed in terms of having life in this family.<sup>1016</sup> The final destination of the believer is also described in terms of the Father’s house (14:2-4).<sup>1017</sup>

Since the family metaphor was discussed in detail with reference to the Wis text (and mentioned with regard to Jesus and the Father), and it will also be discussed in relation to the opposition between God’s family and the devil’s family, the focus here is on one component of this metaphor, namely the birth out of God. Naturally, we also mention the other elements of the family metaphor and the relationship among them in order to see the whole picture and how this picture is formed by its components. However, except for the birth out of God, we do not describe in details how the elements of the family metaphor are mapped; neither do we discuss in detail what the concept of human family implies.

In order to enter God’s realm, a person must be “born from above” (3:3). The term birth at once hints at the familial aspect of eternal life,<sup>1018</sup> as well as implies that a new life received from above begins for the believer. Since the source of birth is God (1:12-13), the family they are born into cannot be an earthly family, but the divine family of God.<sup>1019</sup> Consequently the childhood in

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<sup>1013</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 177.

<sup>1014</sup> Note that in explaining this metaphor as well as the family of God metaphor, I rely on van der Watt, *Family of the King*, which contains an extensive discussion of the topic.

<sup>1015</sup> Culpepper, “The Pivot of John’s Prologue,” 31, concludes that “by claiming the designation τέκνα Θεοῦ the Johannine community was identifying itself (or perhaps more broadly all Christianity) as the heir to a role and standing which Israel had abdicated by her failure to receive the Son of God.”

<sup>1016</sup> For the relational aspect of the *family* metaphor, see Böckler, “Unser Vater,” 249-261.

<sup>1017</sup> This latter metaphor is discussed in relation to the earthly life of the righteous.

<sup>1018</sup> See van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 175; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:138. Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 163-165, notes that the family structures and conventions were not all the same in the ancient Mediterranean world; however, there are some general tendencies that can be described. This can help us to understand the references, clues John makes to family life. Besides, in many cases John explains the metaphors.

<sup>1019</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 177. Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 58: the notion of man as the child of God “develops into an ‘eschatological’ concept, both in Judaism and in the Mystery religions: man becomes God’s child (or son) only when he has been transferred into a new existence . . . when a man is made the son of God by initiation into the Mysteries, and thus is ‘begotten’ anew or ‘born’ anew.”



this family will be a special one where the believer is the child of God (1:12)<sup>1020</sup> and brother of Jesus (20:17).<sup>1021</sup>

The reference to birth and family relations in the same textual unit in 1:12-13, shows that the text itself marks the connection between birth and family metaphor.<sup>1022</sup> Clearly Jesus talks about something else than earthly birth here (3:5);<sup>1023</sup> earthly birth and spiritual birth are contrasted in 1:12-13:<sup>1024</sup>

ὅσοι δὲ ἔλαβον αὐτόν,  
ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ἐξουσίαν τέκνα θεοῦ γενέσθαι,  
τοῖς πιστεύουσιν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ,  
οἳ οὐκ ἐξ αἱμάτων  
οὐδὲ ἐκ θελήματος σαρκὸς  
οὐδὲ ἐκ θελήματος ἀνδρὸς  
ἀλλ' ἐκ θεοῦ ἐγεννήθησαν.<sup>1025</sup>

What is interesting is that the same term, γεννάω, is used both for earthly and spiritual birth, but the latter is a metaphorical expression.<sup>1026</sup> Via the Great Chain Metaphor we understand that here divine things are conceived of in human terms. In one single expression, born of God, both the

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<sup>1020</sup> Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:11, notes that the Gospel makes a distinction between τέκνα θεοῦ (John 1:12ab; 9:52) and υἱός (5:26-27); this latter is only used for Jesus: "Yet, while John preserves a vocabulary difference between Jesus as God's son and Christians as God's children, it is in John that our present state as God's children on this earth comes out most clearly."

<sup>1021</sup> See Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 241-242.

<sup>1022</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 180-181.

<sup>1023</sup> There are many occurrences of "birth" or related terms in the Gospel (see van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 168-170, for the references to earthly and spiritual birth in John); we shall only focus on few of them to describe the metaphor of spiritual birth.

<sup>1024</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 170: the Gospel speaks about earthly birth parallel to spiritual birth: "This parallel use supports the idea of metaphorical application. . . . These two types of birth of course differ substantially. . . . flesh vs. spirit; above vs. below or cosmos."

<sup>1025</sup> But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. 1:12-13 can be paralleled with 3:3, 5.

<sup>1026</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 186, argues that 1:12 probably speaks of a progress and not a momentary event. This is supported by ἐξουσία, a "person is put into a position to be and to act."

source domain (biological event that characterizes humans) and the target domain (spiritual event related to God) appear; this makes us understand that it is not the natural phenomenon of birth that is being discussed here, but the spiritual experience of entering into communion with God. The event that is conceived here as birth, also has the characteristics of earthly birth mapped into; thus it results in life, childhood, and membership in a family. However, since God's realm is different from human world, the nature and mode of entering this world is also different. Consequently, life gained through divine birth also differs from earthly life: "The nature of the birth and consequent existence depend on the source (ἐκ) from which the birth is initiated."<sup>1027</sup> Birth from above is the gift of God that goes beyond human existence.<sup>1028</sup> It is not an earthly existence that is received through this birth, but a new existence,<sup>1029</sup> "a continuing existence within God's family."<sup>1030</sup>

6:57 is the description of the "'flow' of eternal life from its source".<sup>1031</sup>

καθὼς ἀπέστειλέν με ὁ ζῶν πατήρ  
καὶ γὰρ ζῶ διὰ τὸν πατέρα,  
καὶ ὁ τρώγων με κακεῖνος  
ζήσκει δι' ἐμέ.<sup>1032</sup>

This on the one hand expresses the close relationship between the members in the family of God,<sup>1033</sup> and the idea that life is received as the quality of this communion; on the other hand it

<sup>1027</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 178.

<sup>1028</sup> See Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 59-60.

<sup>1029</sup> Guhrt, *NIDNTT* 3:832; cf. Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 2:974; Bennema, *The Power of Saving Wisdom*, 177; See John 19:26-27: "Woman, here is your son" and "here is your mother." Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 234, says that in this instance "Jesus employs a revelatory formula ('Behold') and performative language. Like a marriage declaration, his pronouncement actually accomplishes or effects the new relationship that it declares. By his declaration, Jesus constitutes a new family, mother and son."

<sup>1030</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 179.

<sup>1031</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 205, who also adds: "6:57 expresses the typical *hierarchical structure* within the family. Because the Father disposes over life, and gives it to Jesus, Jesus gives life to believers." 6:57 reveals "a chain of sources of life" (van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 205). Similar idea is found in 5:19-30. Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:283, compares it with 5:26.

<sup>1032</sup> Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me.

<sup>1033</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 205; Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 248.

also states that the life received through being born of God is actually taking part in the life of the Father. “This type of life qualitatively corresponds to that which God possesses. . . . Eternal basically marks life as being of the quality or nature of above.”<sup>1034</sup> This quality enables the believers to interact with the divine.<sup>1035</sup> This idea is very clearly expressed in 14:19-20: the disciples will see Jesus “because they live as he lives. They share the same mode of existence.”<sup>1036</sup> Being born of God, thus, means a “re-socialization” in terms of the family of God; the believers enter a new family and get a new identity and status.<sup>1037</sup> The distinction between the earthly world and that of God, and the believers’ relation to these worlds is well illustrated by 15:19:

εἰ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου ἦτε,  
 ὁ κόσμος ἂν τὸ ἴδιον ἐφίλει·  
 ὅτι δὲ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου οὐκ ἐστέ, ἀλλ’ ἐγὼ ἐξελεξάμην ὑμᾶς ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου,  
 διὰ τοῦτο μισεῖ ὑμᾶς ὁ κόσμος.<sup>1038</sup>

Birth, thus, functions here as the metaphor of the initiation of life with God: those who are born of God become the children of God (1:12-13).<sup>1039</sup> Van der Watt argues that “it makes better sense” if we read both origin and ownership in ἐκ θεοῦ: “they are children of God, and to become children of God they are born of God. . . . The genitive, θεοῦ, is an indication of the nature of this social structure and relationship.”<sup>1040</sup> The idea that birth into a family determines

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<sup>1034</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 202. Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 104: “Eternal life is not something that believers will receive in the future; it is that quality of life that begins when one receives Jesus as the revelation of God.”

<sup>1035</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 178.

<sup>1036</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 209.

<sup>1037</sup> Jan G. van der Watt, “Salvation in the Gospel according to John,” in *Salvation in the New Testament: Perspectives on Soteriology*, ed. Jan G. van der Watt, NovTSup 121 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 126.

<sup>1038</sup> If you belonged to the world, the world would love you as its own. Because you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world—therefore the world hates you. See also 17:14, 16

<sup>1039</sup> Weidemann, “The Victory of Protology over Eschatology?,” 304: “In 1:1c explicitly attributes a share in God’s essence to the Logos . . . Because of that God ‘communicates’ his own ‘nature’ in the Logos, and consequently those who receive the Logos become *children of God*. . . . the same holds for ‘seeing his glory’ (1:14) and receiving ‘grace upon grace from his fullness’ (1:16).”

<sup>1040</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 182. Ἐκ θεοῦ is translated by some as *begotten*; see for example, Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:12, 130, who says that the English term *begotten* implies the idea of divine agency in birth.

one's identity, status and even behaviour,<sup>1041</sup> functions here in the context of God's family: God as the Father determines the identity, attitude and actions of the believers (12:25-26; 13:4-17; 14:12, 15, 21, 23; 15:4-19; 17:18; 20:21-23).<sup>1042</sup> Culpepper notes that the sending of the Paraclete in 20:22 "is almost a re-enactment of the creation scene in Genesis 2:7."<sup>1043</sup> This moment marks the fulfilment of the creation according to God's purpose: man's fate has been accomplished through belief in God's family; he received power and life to live and act as the child of God.

We can illustrate the metaphor in the following way:

Source domain: Birth of mother	Target domain: Birth of God
Earthly event	Spiritual event
Source is an earthly mother	Source is God
Results in earthly life	Results in eternal life
childhood	being part of God's realm
parenthood	God becomes father
becoming part of an earthly family	becoming part of the family of God
identity, characteristics	identity, characteristics
and behaviour shaped by earthly father	and behaviour shaped by God

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<sup>1041</sup> See van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 166-168; also Neyrey, *The Gospel of John*, 126. Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:756: "The notion of spiritual parentage drew on the standard conception that children reflect the nature of their parents (as in 3:6)." See 8:39 where Jesus links the behaviour of a person with his origins and contrasts the family of God with that of the devil.

<sup>1042</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 178-183. Van der Watt also notes (192 n. 149): "That any person's true identity lies on the spiritual level may be seen in the way in which the implicit author focuses on the heavenly origin of Jesus, as his true origin."

<sup>1043</sup> Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 243. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 474; Max Turner, *The Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts: In the New Testament Church and Today*, rev. ed. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2005), 90-92, observe the link with Gen 2:7 and Wis 15:11 (also Philo), expressing that this implies the idea of new creation in John. See also Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 2:1204; Jan A. du Rand, "The Creation Motif in the Fourth Gospel: Perspectives on Its Narratological Function within a Judaistic Background," in Van Belle, van der Watt and Maritz, *Theology and Christology in the Fourth Gospel*, 21-46. Witherington, *John's Wisdom*, 343, also finds similarities with Wis 7:22-27.

In addition there are three more details that enrich the image of birth from God. 1:12b says: ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ἐξουσίαν τέκνα θεοῦ γενέσθαι. “Ἐξουσία usually occurs in connection with the mission of Jesus to give life (17:2; 1:10-12; 5:27; see also 3:35; 13:3 etc.).”<sup>1044</sup> The birth from God, thus, should be interpreted in relation to Jesus’ mission.<sup>1045</sup> Thus becoming the child of God is realized as a gift of God through Jesus (3:27; 6:37, 44, 65)—this happens because of the functional unity between the Father and the Son.<sup>1046</sup> Another detail is that in 3:3-5 the references to birth are intertwined with references to the Kingdom of God; this implies that the birth mentioned here is that of the “child of a king.”<sup>1047</sup> In 16:21-22 a comparison is made between the fear of the disciples and the pain of birth, which changes into joy. This emphasizes that birth of God is liminality; it is a step into another status, another reality that is the reality of God. In this reality, the disciples are expected to behave and act in unity with Jesus.<sup>1048</sup>

#### 3.1.1.4 *Earthly Life in the Context of the Gospel*

It has been mentioned that earthly life is defined by the concepts of time and limitedness. I shall take a closer look at these concepts in this section and see what metaphorical structuring describes these concepts. Earthly life is described by way of various metaphors, TIME IS MOTION, LIFE IS A JOURNEY, LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE AND DEATH IS DEPARTURE, LIFE IS A PRECIOUS POSSESSION, A LIFETIME IS A DAY. They implicitly reflect on the theme discussed here, on the one hand, by way of contrast, and on the other hand, by reflecting on the moment when human existence can link to eternal life. The metaphors that conceive of earthly life include a kind of movement in their schema, and they perceive earthly life as a limited and transitory period after

<sup>1044</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 185. See Matthew Vellanickal, *The Divine Sonship of Christians in the Johannine Writings*, AnBib 72 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1977), 149.

<sup>1045</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 185. Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:11, notes that the translation of ἐξουσία as “right” does not fit the Johannine thought, where “sonship is based on divine begetting, not on any claim on man’s part.” However, van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 185, emphasizes that ἐξουσία “indicates that a person is put in a position of receiving the right to act according to a specific status on the basis of birthright received by the Father.” See Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 136. Vellanickal, *Divine Sonship*, 150: ἐξουσία emphasizes “the aspect of ability [to become children of God], though received from outside.”

<sup>1046</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 186.

<sup>1047</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 174, 381. Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:757, notes that in ancient times status was very important: “noble birth counts as a virtue.”

<sup>1048</sup> See more about unity in acting at *abiding* and *friendship* metaphors.

which one departs to his final state. Since the metaphors of eternal life will be analysed below in details, I shall only discuss here the metaphors that structure earthly life. Thus whenever life or death is mentioned from now on in this section, I refer to earthly life and physical death unless the concept of life and death is otherwise specified.

Let us begin with LIFE IS BEING PRESENT HERE by which life is conceived as a bounded region.<sup>1049</sup> As related metaphors, BIRTH IS conceived as ARRIVAL, while DEATH IS conceived as DEPARTURE. We can see this metaphorical conception structuring the earthly life of Jesus with his birth into this world perceived as coming in, his life as presence, and his death as departure (1:9-11, 14; 7:33).<sup>1050</sup>

Ἦν τὸ φῶς τὸ ἀληθινόν

. . .

ἐρχόμενον εἰς τὸν κόσμον.<sup>1051</sup> (1:9).

Ὑμεῖς δὲ οὐκ οἴδατε πόθεν ἔρχομαι ἢ ποῦ ὑπάγω.<sup>1052</sup> (8:14e).

The transitory character of earthly life is perceived via the metaphor TIME IS MOTION. 7:6, 8; also 2:4; 4:21, 23; 5:25, 28<sup>1053</sup> perceive the future as moving towards the present where the person is located. In these texts TIME IS MOTION is combined with EVENTS AND ACTIONS metaphor; this makes possible to see time as coming or approaching us. But we can also see another version of TIME IS MOTION; in 12:27 Jesus says: ἦλθον εἰς τὴν ὥραν ταύτην.<sup>1054</sup> Here the future is standing and the present with us is moving towards it.<sup>1055</sup>

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<sup>1049</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 98.

<sup>1050</sup> See also 8:14; 12:8; 13:33, 36; 14:2-4, 28; 18:37 and the texts that speak of descent and ascent.

<sup>1051</sup> The true light . . . was coming into the world.

<sup>1052</sup> But you do not know where I come from or where I am going.

<sup>1053</sup> Also 7:30; 8:20; 12:23; 13:1; 16:2, 4, 21, 25, 32; 17:1.

<sup>1054</sup> I have come to this hour.

<sup>1055</sup> See Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 44-45, for TIME IS MOTION.

Another metaphor that shows a different aspect of life is LIFE IS A JOURNEY. As it was said earlier, this metaphor structures earthly life in terms of a journey on which human beings as travellers head towards a destination (10:9; 11:9-10; 12:35; 14:6).<sup>1056</sup> The alternative paths of good and evil that lead to different destinations are present in 10:1-18, 25-30: the gate or climbing in the sheepfold as a thief. But we also see another property of journey, the guide who leads the traveller in the person of Jesus: “the sheep follow him because they know his voice” (10:4). Similarly, when Jesus says, “I am the way” in 14:6,<sup>1057</sup> via LIFE IS A JOURNEY we can understand that Jesus is the right path that leads to life. But 14:6 also shows another property of LIFE IS A JOURNEY, the element of destination: οὐδεὶς ἔρχεται πρὸς τὸν πατέρα εἰ μὴ δι’ ἐμοῦ.<sup>1058</sup> Jesus shows the true way that leads to the Father’s home (14:1-31).<sup>1059</sup> On the contrary, those who do not follow this road will end up reaching eternal death (3:36).<sup>1060</sup> 14:6 already hints as Jesus’ being the guide, but we can find this also in the metaphor that perceives Jesus as the light (1:5-9; 3:19; 8:12; also 9:5) that makes people see.

Since LIFE IS A JOURNEY, DEATH IS THE END OF LIFE’S JOURNEY:<sup>1061</sup>

ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμὲ  
 καὶ ἀποθάνῃ  
 ζήσεται<sup>1062</sup> (11:25c).

This verse pictures death as the end of earthly life (3:14; 8:28; 12:32, 34; 13:36). But the verse also projects that physical death does not necessarily put an end to human life. While earthly life ends with death, human life continues. Physical death does not contrast life since human life can

<sup>1056</sup> See Lakoff, “The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor,” 222-223; Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 63-64.

<sup>1057</sup> See the background of the “I am” discourses in Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:535-538, who also suggests that John was influenced by the Isis aretologies. Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 374, suggests that “if there is such an influence in the ‘I am’ discourses in John it has come to this Gospel by way of the influence of sapiential material on the Fourth Evangelist and not directly.” For the background of the way, see Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 2:940-943.

<sup>1058</sup> No one comes to the Father except through me.

<sup>1059</sup> See Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 2:939.

<sup>1060</sup> See Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 9-10

<sup>1061</sup> See Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 8, 9-10.

<sup>1062</sup> Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live.

continue after death. As we will see below, this is due to the life received from God that makes people live notwithstanding their physical death. To continue with the idea of earthly life, the verse perceives death as departure towards a final destination. This structures one aspect of physical death, namely that it leads towards a final state after death. The metaphor that views death as departure is, thus, extended to perceive DEATH AS GOING TO A FINAL DESTINATION (7:33; 8:21; 14:2-4; 16:7, 28; 17:11)<sup>1063</sup> that gives an orientation to the departure. Via STATES ARE LOCATIONS we can understand that eternal life is conceived in 11:25 as the final location towards one departs.

11:26a continues the idea of 11:25:

καὶ παῖς ὁ ζῶν καὶ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμὲ οὐ μὴ ἀποθάνῃ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.<sup>1064</sup>

This statement sets life in contrast with death. *Death* mentioned here, therefore, cannot refer to physical death; death has to refer to eternal death as separation from God. The text accordingly describes two different final locations: life (3:16-18a, 36a; 11:25) and the location of eternal death (3:36bc).<sup>1065</sup>

Until the final location, however, one has to journey through life, reaching different locations, mirrored by 5:24:

Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν  
ὅτι ὁ τὸν λόγον μου ἀκούων  
καὶ πιστεύων τῷ πέμψαντί με  
ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον  
καὶ εἰς κρίσιν οὐκ ἔρχεται,

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<sup>1063</sup> See also the texts that speak about Jesus' ascent to the Father.

<sup>1064</sup> And everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.

<sup>1065</sup> As we have noted, based on Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 14, even if the departure is not mentioned and the text only says that the believer will be in the Father's house forever, the expression is still based on the metaphor DEATH IS DEPARTURE FOR A FINAL LOCATION.



ἀλλὰ μεταβέβηκεν ἐκ τοῦ θανάτου εἰς τὴν ζωὴν.<sup>1066</sup>

Via STATES ARE LOCATIONS we understand that both death and life are perceived as locations. But how can we understand that somebody passes from death to life? “A change of state is metaphorically a change of location.”<sup>1067</sup> A person can change his state during earthly life. In John there are two locations one can reach: death and life. Those who receive eternal life move from one location (death) to another (life). In this case death refers to spiritual death (see also 12:35)<sup>1068</sup> and life refers to spiritual life; so a change of state is possible. One can move from death to life only up to the point of departing from earthly life, because physical death finalizes the state human beings are in at the moment of death. Thus, although there are two spiritual locations during earthly life, only one final location is available for each (either condemnation or eternal life). Contrary to the believers, those who do not receive life will not change their location on earth, and their spiritual state, i.e. death, is finalized at the moment of physical death, which means perishing without a further chance of changing state—in other words, eternal death.

The texts also points to a final location that is being with the Father by referring to Jesus as the one that was sent. Ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ τοῦ πατρὸς μου μοναὶ πολλάι εἰσιν<sup>1069</sup> (14:2a). It is the Father’s home (14:2-4) that will be the final state of the believers, the fulfilment of life.<sup>1070</sup> Culpepper notes that the noun μοναὶ is linked to the verb μένω (abide); the *dwelling place* may be an allusion to the Temple, but, as Culpepper notes, Jesus spoke of the temple of his body in

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<sup>1066</sup> Very truly, I tell you, anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life, and does not come under judgment, but has passed from death to life.

<sup>1067</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 7.

<sup>1068</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 211: “The condition for moving from death to life is to hear and believe. This implies that the person who is ‘dead’ can hear and believe, which points to the metaphorical nature. Death here refers to spiritual death.” Life, therefore, should also refer to spiritual life.

<sup>1069</sup> In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places.

<sup>1070</sup> Relating 14:2-3 to 14:23 and chap. 15, Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 2:932-939, however, emphasizes the present aspect of the dwelling place, μονή in 14:2-3, as “the present experience of believers in God’s presence” (936). We shall, however, think—taken into account that the context is about Jesus’ departure/death—that notwithstanding the possible present connotation of dwelling, the text also speaks about future eschatology, the final dwelling of the believer in the Father’s house. For the various interpretations of the dwelling place, see Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 2:932-939.

2:21 “playing on the concept of the Temple as the place where one meets God.”<sup>1071</sup> The observation of Culpepper underlines the relational aspect of the *dwelling* as abiding in God.

Another instance of the metaphor DEATH IS DEPARTURE has to be mentioned that of the ascent or descent.<sup>1072</sup> In John this property of DEATH IS DEPARTURE is also present: the believer ascends to the Father’s house similarly to Jesus (13:36; 14:2-4). There is no descent for those who do not believe since the Gospel’s cosmology does not include the notion of an underworld; the devil’s rule lies on earth. However, John mentions that the devil will be thrown out of earth (12:31; 16:11, 33)<sup>1073</sup> and the unbelievers belong to his family (8:44); this implies that the unbelievers do not only get separated from God, but also from the earth because there will be no place for the evil on earth. So even if the metaphor is not present, the idea that the unbelievers take a different direction and get separated from God is implied.

To conclude, the location one reaches during earthly life before departing from it influences his final location. The final destination directly depends on whether the person belongs to God’s realm or that of the devil on earth; the final destination will be the one to which one already belongs spiritually<sup>1074</sup> and at the moment of death departs towards this destination. So we could also say that people depart to their final destination spiritually when they choose to believe or not in Jesus (see John 5:24). Death is the point of departure from earthly life towards eternal life or eternal death.<sup>1075</sup> The final destination of the believer that is eternal life is pictured qualitatively in terms of peace, light, being in Jesus and love, knowledge, being in the hand of God and the

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<sup>1071</sup> Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 210. See also Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 2:936-937, who notes (934) that the language of *dwelling* occurs in Wis as well; he mentions Wis 1:4; 3:9; 7:27, 28; 8:9, 16; 10:16 as parallels (934 n. 37).

<sup>1072</sup> See Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 11. See the section on the metaphor ALIVE IS UP below.

<sup>1073</sup> Apocalyptic motif can be grasped here (see Anderson, “Why This Study Is Needed,” 65), similarly to the eschatological judgment scene in Wis 5:17-23.

<sup>1074</sup> See also the section on ALIVE IS UP.

<sup>1075</sup> Newman and Nida, *A Translator’s Handbook*, 89: “In the theology of John’s Gospel there is no third alternative; The (*sic*) final destiny of a man is either eternal life or eternal death.”

Father's house (14:27; 8:12; 17:22-23; 17:3; 10:28-29; 14:2-4) as elaborations of the final location.<sup>1076</sup>

In addition there are other metaphors that picture earthly life as a limited period. LIFE IS A PRECIOUS POSSESSION that appears in 12:25:

ὁ φιλῶν τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ  
ἀπολλύει αὐτήν,  
καὶ ὁ μισῶν τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ τούτῳ  
εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον φυλάξει αὐτήν.<sup>1077</sup>

Human life is perceived as an entity: it can be kept or lost. Human beings may perceive their earthly life as a precious possession<sup>1078</sup>—the expression ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ τούτῳ shows that the text speaks of the value of life on earth. But Jesus appeals to a contradictory view on earthly life; earthly life is devalued in the promise of eternal life (6:27).<sup>1079</sup> Those who love earthly life shall lose their life, while those who live their life on the earth in view of the eternal life shall keep it for eternal life. So what happens is that following the words of Jesus, eternal life becomes the precious possession instead of earthly life. This is an attitude which also results in deeds, i.e. following Jesus. Here the text itself makes difference between human life, earthly life and eternal life, but also between individual life and the general phenomenon of life. This latter distinction leads to a metaphorical structuring that views the general phenomenon of eternal life as the cause of individual life.

The final metaphorical structuring we deal with is A LIFETIME IS A DAY (9:4-5; 11:9-10<sup>1080</sup> and 12:35-36). The cyclical character of life can be recognized via this metaphor. As it was explained

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<sup>1076</sup> Cf. Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 68. These metaphors will be discussed again later.

<sup>1077</sup> Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

<sup>1078</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 29, 36.

<sup>1079</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 2:874, lists similar ideas from ancient pagan and Jewish literature, noting that “the Fourth Gospel’s Jewish audience and sources would probably understand Jesus’ words more in line with the biblical tradition of preparedness to suffer for God’s honor.”

<sup>1080</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 253, does not consider 11:9-10 a metaphor, contrary to Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 325-326, and Koester, *The Word of Life*, 188-189. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St.*

with regards to Wis text, the metaphor perceives the stages of life in terms of increasing and decreasing of light and heat.<sup>1081</sup>

οὐχὶ δώδεκα ὥραι εἰσιν τῆς ἡμέρας;  
ἐάν τις περιπατῇ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ,  
οὐ προσκόπτει,  
ὅτι τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου τούτου βλέπει.<sup>1082</sup> (11:9).

A LIFETIME IS A DAY is combined with LIFE IS A JOURNEY that shows man walking on the path of life. But what is more notable here is that light has two different target concepts here; it both points to earthly life and Jesus. This gives an interesting dynamics of these metaphors. When Jesus says that he is the light of the world (9:5; 12:46), we should understand that he is the true light that makes people see (9:35-39), and promotes life (11:25). People should recognize Jesus as the light. And here comes the role of the other metaphor that perceives earthly life as light; this metaphor emphasizes the necessity of accepting Jesus while there is still time.<sup>1083</sup> One has a limited time, his earthly life, to accept Jesus; the man who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going (12:35). Via DEATH IS DEPARTURE we understand that this means that one can only choose to believe or not in Jesus in his earthly life; when death happens, one will necessarily go towards the final destination. Darkness has yet another meaning: spiritual death. Those who do not accept Jesus are stumbling; they do not find the way, they do not find life. Yet, their time is limited; when the moment of physical death arrives, there is no possibility to find Jesus anymore. All these metaphors discussed above picture human life as finite as long as it is related to the earth; this limitedness can only be transcended by departure to above.

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*John*, 326, links it to the “work of Jesus in illuminating the world through his death.” We consider it a metaphor that exhibits the elements of both A LIFETIME IS A DAY and LIFE IS A JOURNEY (man *walks* by day).

<sup>1081</sup> As explained by Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 88.

<sup>1082</sup> “Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world.”

<sup>1083</sup> See van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 251-254, who also notices another implication of this metaphorical structuring: “Jesus, as the light, is identified as the one who determines when it is daytime” (252).

There have been mentioned lots of metaphors that define earthly life and few that define eternal life. Since the whole discussion on John is centered on the concept of eternal life and related metaphors, I focused on the metaphors of earthly life here with the aim to define it against eternal life.

### 3.1.1.5 *Alive in Terms of Up*

Several metaphors have been mentioned that prepare the analysis of the metaphor ALIVE IS UP. I have already mentioned that eternal life is linked to the realm of God (1:1; 3:3, 5; 5:26; 6:57; 17:5, 24),<sup>1084</sup> which is conceived in terms of up (1:51; 3:3, 5, 31; 8:23). Moreover, eternal life is structured by LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE combined with the Great Chain Metaphor, and thus, life is perceived as presence in the family of God. The metaphors LIFE IS A JOURNEY and DEATH IS DEPARTURE TO A FINAL DESTINATION describe earthly life as a journey that leads through different locations to a final destination.<sup>1085</sup> This final destination is the Father's home for the believers (14:2-4). This departure is perceived as ascent (3:13; 6:62; 7:33-34; 8:14, 21; 13:3, 33, 36; 14:28; 16:5, 10, 28; 20:17) due to the metaphor that perceives God's realm as being up. Jesus' journey on earth is the way to follow to reach the destination he also reached, the Father's house (14:2a).

The death of Jesus (and also that of the believers) has to be viewed in relation to his resurrection<sup>1086</sup> and glory, a view on death we come across in Wis as well.<sup>1087</sup> Death is a

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<sup>1084</sup> This conception itself presents life in terms of up; however we would like to describe the believer's fate here.

<sup>1085</sup> Cory, "Wisdom's rescue," 111: "In traditional wisdom tales, the protagonist is rescued *before* death; however, the Tabernacles discourse suggests that Jesus' rescue will take place at the moment of death. At first it might appear that the evangelist has made a quite radical innovation in adapting the wisdom tale in this way, but there is precedent for such a modification of the wisdom tale, namely, the Wisdom of Solomon's story of the vindication of the righteous one (Wis 1:16-5:23)."

<sup>1086</sup> Although resurrection is related to eternal life (it can be one aspect of it), this concept is not examined; the focus is on eternal life and its relation to other concepts, like peace, belief, etc. Wis is ambiguous about the bodily aspect of immortality, thus, this would not provide such a good ground for comparison.

<sup>1087</sup> Witherington, *John's Wisdom*, 55: "Glory is a familiar concept from the Old Testament which refers to the splendor or majesty or overwhelming weightiness of the divine presence here." He also notes (*John's Wisdom*, 55) that "*doxa*, or radiance, is regularly associated with Wisdom as well (see Wisd. Sol. 6:12; 7:10; 7:26; 9:10)." We note that in the last reference δόξα characterizes God: "from the throne of your glory send her." Nevertheless, it is definitely true that wisdom is associated with glory or radiance in Wis.

departure towards the completion of life in God's sphere. The term used to describe Jesus' crucifixion is ὑψώω, *lifting up* (3:14; 8:28; 12:32, 34) that also points to his return to the Father (3:13), his resurrection and glory (17:1-22). "In John 'being lifted up' refers to one continuous action of ascent . . . The first step in the ascent is when Jesus is lifted up on the cross;<sup>1088</sup> the second step is when he is raised up from death; the final step is when he is lifted up to heaven."<sup>1089</sup> Jesus ascends to where he belongs that is the realm of God, of above.<sup>1090</sup> But the crucifixion of Jesus described in terms of being lifted up does not only serve to express the exaltation of Jesus, but also to point towards salvation:

Καὶ καθὼς Μωϋσῆς ὕψωσεν τὸν ὄφιν ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ,  
οὕτως ὑψωθῆναι δεῖ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου,  
ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ἐν αὐτῷ ἔχῃ ζωὴν αἰώνιον.<sup>1091</sup> (3:14-15).

Dodd<sup>1092</sup> observes that the context does not explain the passage in John, but the "readers of the LXX however would remember that the serpent was, in the words of the Book of Wisdom, σύμβολον σωτηρίας (Wisd. xvi. 6): it signified the means through which men passed from death to life." Dodd also notes that Jewish and Hellenistic interpretations also note the importance of *looking* at the serpent that conveys the idea of the vision (knowledge of God) through which salvation is attained.<sup>1093</sup>

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<sup>1088</sup> See also Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 96 [own reference].

<sup>1089</sup> Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:146.

<sup>1090</sup> Zimmermann, "Imagery in John," 20: "there is no doubt that being lifted up to death on the cross is meant: 'crucifixion is lifting up.' Even in this act of extreme human 'humiliation' John remains true to his 'spatial concept' which is that 'Jesus is above.' Despite all attempts at human disparagement and humiliation, Jesus remains in the 'sphere above.' . . . Because 'above' is good, the death on the cross, which is classified as lifting up, also receives a positive connotation." Beasley-Murray, *John*, 54: contrary to other writers, John does not see the cross event as humiliation, but part of the glorification of Jesus. De Boer, "Jesus' Departure to the Father in John," 18-19, says that because this language is applied to crucifixion, it shows that "Jesus departs (ascends) to the Father via the cross."

<sup>1091</sup> And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

<sup>1092</sup> Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 306.

<sup>1093</sup> Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 306-307. Van der Watt, "Salvation in the Gospel according to John," 117: the parallel with the tradition of the copper snake illustrates that the cross is also the "loving and saving presence of God amongst people (3:14-15)."

The exaltation of Jesus is the end of his mission (3:14),<sup>1094</sup> and his mission was to *lift* humankind up to the realm of God. Jesus prepares the Father's house for the believers towards which they can depart after their psychical death (14:2-3), but the believers start living in the realm of God spiritually on earth already (5:24).<sup>1095</sup> Via ALIVE IS UP we can understand that they have life because they belong to above. They are still in the world (17:11, 15), but separated from the world spiritually (15:19; 17:14, 16).<sup>1096</sup> 5:24 says that the one who has life is not condemned and "has passed from death to life." As described above, life and death are conceptualized here as locations on life's journey. This implies that the person who departed from death and reached the location of life is already present in the life that characterizes God's realm. This, naturally, also implies the ability to have contact with the divine (3:3, 5): "Passing from death to life in 5:24 implies moving to another state of being where existence and relations within the divine sphere become a reality."<sup>1097</sup> The believer is thus shown as being present in the realm of God, while still living on the earth. This state of presence in God's life reaches completion when the believer is taken by Jesus to the Father's house (14:3bc):

πάλιν ἔρχομαι καὶ παραλήμψομαι ὑμᾶς πρὸς ἑμαυτόν,  
ἵνα ὅπου εἰμι ἐγὼ καὶ ὑμεῖς ἦτε.<sup>1098</sup>

### 3.1.2 The Devil in Relation to God and the Earth

#### 3.1.2.1 The Contrasting Realities of God and the Devil

On the level of cosmology we find two opposing realms. *Above* is the realm of God; *below* is the earth,<sup>1099</sup> which is also the devil's dominion (8:23; 12:31; 14:30; 16:11).<sup>1100</sup> The devil is

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<sup>1094</sup> See Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 152.

<sup>1095</sup> See also Beasley-Murray, *John*, 76. Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 259: "the 'coming' eschatological hour, which men had hoped for at the end of time, is declared to be already present, for it is the hour in which the Word of the Revealer is heard."

<sup>1096</sup> Van der Watt, "Salvation in the Gospel according to John," 117: "As Jesus is lifted up on the cross, his movement back to his Father and away from the *cosmos* starts. He, for example, draws all the believers to him, which implies that they are dualistically separated from this world to be with the Light and Life (12:31-32)."

<sup>1097</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 203.

<sup>1098</sup> I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also.

consistently called ἄρχων, ruler, judge, prince,<sup>1101</sup> which shows its control over the earth.<sup>1102</sup> However, the devil is not the counterpart of God on the same level.<sup>1103</sup> They are not equal in power, but God's supreme power is emphasized (12:31). Koester notes that contrary to the other gospels, the devil in John "is not fully personified. He lurks in the shadows, carrying out his designs through human agents."<sup>1104</sup>

The cosmological contrast between God and the devil comes with a contrast with ethical implications.<sup>1105</sup> It illustrates how the nature, qualities, attitude and actions of God are totally opposing the devil's nature, qualities, actions and attitude. The implication of this contrast is that these qualities, good or bad, "are not abstract realities existing on their own . . . but are always linked to and expressed by (*P*)persons," to God and his followers or to the devil and his followers.<sup>1106</sup> The followers of Jesus and those of the devil thus also stand in contrast, and their different qualities that are linked to the one, whom they follow, enhance the ethical opposition. As it was said above, the creation is not evil by nature, but because the devil resides on earth, the

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<sup>1099</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:744: "whereas Greeks thought of dark deities of the dead in the chthonic or underworld, Jewish people were more apt to associate Satan with the world of humanity where he worked."

<sup>1100</sup> Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:242, notes that in 1:4 the fall "is not described, but it is presupposed, though only in v. 10 (at the beginning of the third strophe), where it comes in unheralded."

<sup>1101</sup> See "ἄρχων," *BDAG*, ad loc.

<sup>1102</sup> Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 38: there is no mention of the devil at the creation account in 1:3-4; "he belongs to the created world as a possibility, and v. 5 will show that he belongs to the fallen world as a reality."

<sup>1103</sup> Nevertheless, as John Painter, "Monotheism and Dualism: John and Qumran," in Van Belle, van der Watt and Maritz, *Theology and Christology in the Fourth Gospel*, 242, notes, "the Gospel presupposes the reality of the power of darkness. It is because of the pervasive power of darkness in the world created by the λόγος that the λόγος became flesh"—contrary to those who think John demythologizes the power of devil (see Painter, "Monotheism and Dualism," 240-243). See also Erik Eynikel, "The Qumran Background of Johannine Ethics," in van der Watt and Zimmermann, *Rethinking the Ethics of John*, 102-113.

<sup>1104</sup> Koester, *The Word of Life*, 75.

<sup>1105</sup> Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 29-31: the early oriental Gnosticism that has been used by the Evangelist as source for the figure of Logos, has been altered and the mythology has been repressed by the OT faith in God as the Creator; therefore we do not find dualism on the level of cosmology (although the darkness stands in opposition to God, its role as an independent power is limited; the world stands in opposition to God as the darkness not due to its origin, because the world is God's creation, but rather due to its actual condition), but rather we find it on the level of soteriology. See also Herman Ridderbos, *The Gospel of John: A Theological Commentary*, trans. John Vriend (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 557.

<sup>1106</sup> Van der Watt, *Introduction*, 32, who also goes on: "When Jesus became flesh, his personal qualities of love, truth, etc. were not separated from him. He still was the truth, life, and light although he became flesh (8.12; 14.6)" (33).



ethical contrast is extended to the relationship between God and the earth. Κότω also has the connotation of evil, and *the world* will imply *the world in darkness* (7:7; 8:23; 12:31; 14:30-31; 15:18-19; 16:11, 20, 33; 17:9, 14-16) whenever it is related to the devil or his followers, their qualities and actions.<sup>1107</sup> “The cosmological judgment (above vs. below) of Jesus on this world is done from a religious perspective”; it is a “religious spatial contrast.”<sup>1108</sup> The cosmos pictured in the Gospel needs the salvific act of God through Jesus.<sup>1109</sup> The coming of Jesus exposes how deeply the world is related to the devil (3:19-20; 9:39, 41; 15:22-24). Nevertheless, he comes to bring salvation (1:4-13).<sup>1110</sup> Those who believe in him are related to God and they are the children of God (1:12-13). The unbelievers belong to the devil and they are the children of the devil (8:44); consequently, they will get separated from God (8:47).

The contrast between the realm of God and that of the devil is described in a variety of terms and images, which cover different areas, existence, attitude and actions, and qualities.<sup>1111</sup> One of the images is *life and death*.<sup>1112</sup> While God is life (5:26; 6:57) and gives life (3:16), the devil is a thief (10:10),<sup>1113</sup> who murders and destroys (8:44; 10:10).<sup>1114</sup> The contrast between God and the devil extends to human beings. Humanity is classified according to their attitude to Jesus: *belief* or *unbelief*.<sup>1115</sup> Jesus is the *truth*<sup>1116</sup> and *life* (8:46; 14:6; 11:25), whereas the devil is the father of

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<sup>1107</sup> It is always the context that will tell us which connotation is being implied.

<sup>1108</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 192.

<sup>1109</sup> Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 55, notes the double aspect of the cosmos, which is both “the object of God’s love (3:16)” and “the deceitful power which revolts against God (14:30; 16:11).”

<sup>1110</sup> We do not deal with the question whether history or the world will end; this doesn’t seem important for John either. Eschatology is conceived in terms of eternal life/resurrection, Jesus’ coming, being in the Father’s home and judgment. The devil will be thrown out, just as Wis 5:23 puts it.

<sup>1111</sup> Van der Watt, *Introduction*, 32.

<sup>1112</sup> Naturally, since we discuss the contrast between devil and God, we refer to eternal life and death here and not physical.

<sup>1113</sup> Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 289: “Just as the Word is what he is in the beginning (1.1), so the devil is what he is from the beginning.”

<sup>1114</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:761: “Although the devil’s murder may be specifically connected with falsehood in the fall of Adam and Eve, the devil was not merely a deceiver in the beginning, but from the beginning forward (Rev 12:9; cf. 2 John 7; Rev 13:14); Jewish literature highlights his continuing activity as a deceiver.”

<sup>1115</sup> Cf. Jerome H. Neyrey, *The Gospel of John in Cultural and Rhetorical Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 78-80. See how belief and unbelief influences the value system of believers and unbelievers below.

<sup>1116</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:748: “Jesus’ demand that those who claim to believe in him persevere and understand the truth may well echo Wis 3:9: ‘Those who are persuaded on him will understand the truth, and the faithful in love will remain (προσμενουσιν) with him.’”

*lies* and *murder* (8:44). Therefore, those who believe belong to Jesus; they will know God and have life. On the contrary, those who do not believe are the followers of the devil; they do not know God and will not have life, but will share death.<sup>1117</sup>

There are several other images that also expose the contrast between God/Jesus and the devil together with the opposing qualities of these two realities. Those who believe will *love* and will be loved (15:9-10, 12; 17:26), while the unbelievers will share *hate* (3:20; 15:19<sup>1118</sup>).<sup>1119</sup> The children of God will be *free from sin* (8:36), while the followers of devil will be *slave* to sin (8:24, 34).<sup>1120</sup> Another antithesis is between *good* and *evil* (10:11, 14, 32 vs. 3:19; 7:7; 8:44). 5:29 states that those who have done good will be resurrected for life, while those who have done evil will be resurrected for condemnation. This shows the implications of doing good or bad: people are judged according to their deeds (7:7).

One of the most prominent images to express the contrast between the two realms is *light* and *darkness*. Light and darkness is related to the contrast of good and evil, but also to the contrast between life and death, thus, having both existential and ethical connotation. The image of darkness appears not only as contrast, but as “adversary” of light<sup>1121</sup> (John 1:4-5; 14:30). If Jesus is the personified light, then darkness is personification of the opposing authority, the devil (8:44), or the people who do not accept Jesus (1:9-11)<sup>1122</sup>—the two possible target domains of darkness are related, since those who oppose Jesus are naturally the children of the devil (8:44). Those who do not belong to the light, belong to the darkness. Since they do not belong to light,

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<sup>1117</sup> Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 221, observes that in 6:41f the unbelief of the Jews “finds expression in their murmuring,” while Anderson, *Christology*, 206, sees the grumbling in John 6:43 as a sign of rebellion. The term also appears in John 6:61 when the disciples grumble (see Anderson, *Christology*, 209).

<sup>1118</sup> Also 7:7; 15:18-25; 17:14.

<sup>1119</sup> See Ridderbos, *The Gospel of John*, 523; Neyrey, *The Gospel of John*, 261-262.

<sup>1120</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:750: “The ethical and covenantal sense of slavery and freedom is undoubtedly paramount in the passage.”

<sup>1121</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 256.

<sup>1122</sup> And even where darkness only reflects ignorance, ignorance leads to evil; those who are not in communion with God will necessarily be in communion with the devil. The limitation of human beings turns into evil if it is not opened by belief in Jesus (1:10-11; 14:17; cf. 8:33-59).

they do not have the knowledge of life and cannot act properly.<sup>1123</sup> Therefore darkness has ethical connotation as well: BAD IS BLACK.<sup>1124</sup> But DEATH IS also DARKNESS.<sup>1125</sup> Thus, darkness comes to suggest both death and evil. Since bad is black, GOOD has to be associated with LIGHT (3:21), but LIFE IS also associated with LIGHT (8:12). That is how the images of contrast are interrelated and show the ethical and the existential side of belonging to God or the devil.<sup>1126</sup>

At this moment we do not deal in depth with the metaphors of life; that will be discussed in details below. We only wished to describe these metaphors in order to demonstrate the contrast between God and the devil, believers and unbelievers. The nature, qualities and actions of God and those of the devil stand in opposition. This implies an ethical contrast between God and the devil, and therefore between God's realm and the devil's realm. This contrast is between good and evil; therefore it is unlike the creational contrast. However, we can see that there can be ethical contrast between the Creator and the creation, since the below can become evil and, thus, be in opposition to God who is good. This latter contrast divides humanity, but it also introduces a dichotomy: all those who belong to below cannot belong to above. Darkness and light represent two opposing groups whose nature and actions are totally different. With Jesus' coming humankind will be in light, in communion with God and receiving the qualities of God: life, love, truth, goodness.<sup>1127</sup> This will also affect human life on existential level since the believers will become the children of God (1:12). Those who believe will now belong to above (15:19), and there will be contrast between the disciples and the world (14:19-22; 15:18-19; 16:33; 17:9ff).

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<sup>1123</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 257.

<sup>1124</sup> Cf. Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 185. Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 257-258, notes that Judas leaves in the night in 13:30; this implies that whatever he is about to do is wrong.

<sup>1125</sup> For the metaphor of light and darkness, see Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 89.

<sup>1126</sup> Anderson, *Riddles*, 36: "On one hand, some dualistic features appear simply to state the way things are and where they are headed. Some people operate in spiritual ways, headed for life; others operate in worldly ways, headed for death. On the other hand, other dualistic features seem to explain the responses of individuals and groups to the Revealer—those who receive Jesus' words and works as being from God show evidence of having been rooted in knowledge of the Father; rejections of the Revealer are explained as factors of not being rooted in the reality from above and not knowing the Father."

<sup>1127</sup> See van der Watt, *Introduction*, 33.

### 3.1.2.2 The Value System of the Unbelievers and the Believers

We meet different groups and individuals in the Gospel. I do not intend to deal with them; rather I categorize them according to whether they believe or not in Jesus; thus I talk about two groups, the believers and the unbelievers. But there is one group that I would like to discuss more, the Jews<sup>1128</sup> that claim to believe in God but do not believe in Jesus. Although at first glance their value system looks similar to that of the believers in John—both parties believe in God—the Jews are missing a very important thing: the acceptance of Jesus. This makes a huge difference since it results in a very different arrangement of their values.

Both groups worship the same God and claim to have God with them.<sup>1129</sup> This God is the God whom the Jews worship (2:14ff; 8:41, 54; 11:52) and know (4:22), the Creator God who gives life (1:1-5, 10; 5:26; 6:57), who was active in history (1:6; 3:2; 6:32; 9:3). Jesus does not bring a new God; he “claims to continue the true religion of the God of Abraham, Moses and Isaiah.”<sup>1130</sup> However, as van der Watt says, “with the arrival of Jesus the locus of the presence of God changed” (12:44-45; 14:7, 9).<sup>1131</sup> Contrary to the Jews who have never seen or heard God, Jesus declares the God he has seen (1:18; 5:37).<sup>1132</sup> His presence in the world is above all revelations because everyone who sees Jesus sees the Father:

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<sup>1128</sup> We do not like to enter into discussion regarding the identity of *the Jews* or the attitude of the Gospel towards them; for this, see Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 291-295; Anderson, *Riddles*, 190-193; Francis J. Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, ed. Daniel J. Harrington, SP 4 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1998), 9-11. We distinguish between two groups, the believers and the unbelievers, with *the Jews* referring to the latter here.

<sup>1129</sup> Jan G. van der Watt and Jacobus Kok, “Violence in a Gospel of Love,” in *Coping with Violence in the New Testament*, ed. Pieter G. R. de Villiers and Jan Willem van Henten, STAR 16 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 154-155: “The main question in John (one might call it the essence of this conflict) thus revolves around the issue of its true centre: where, and with whom, is God to be found?” See more in van der Watt and Kok, “Violence in a Gospel of Love,” 154-159.

<sup>1130</sup> Van der Watt, “Salvation in the Gospel according to John,” 104. See also William Loader, “Jesus and the Law in John,” in Van Belle, van der Watt and Maritz, *Theology and Christology in the Fourth Gospel*, 135-154. For the Jewish eschatological expectations fulfilled in Jesus, see Jan G. van der Watt, “Eschatology in John: A Continuous Process of Realizing Events,” in *Eschatology of the New Testament and Some Related Documents*, ed. Jan G. van der Watt, WUNT 2/315 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 109-118.

<sup>1131</sup> Van der Watt, “Salvation in the Gospel according to John,” 109. See also D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, PiNTC (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 491.

<sup>1132</sup> Petersen, *Sociology*, 113: Jesus, “the ‘only’ one is contrasted with the ‘one of many’” that also have wisdom, e.g. Moses.

εἰ ἐγνώκατέ με,  
καὶ τὸν πατέρα μου γνώσεσθε.  
καὶ ἅπ' ἄρτι γινώσκετε αὐτὸν  
καὶ ἐώρακατε αὐτόν.<sup>1133</sup> (14:7).

Jesus, thus, reveals God in a unique way (1:18), and so true belief in the Father is ultimately linked to Jesus:

Ἰησοῦς δὲ ἔκραξεν καὶ εἶπεν·  
ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμὲ οὐ πιστεύει εἰς ἐμὲ ἀλλὰ εἰς τὸν πέμψαντά με<sup>1134</sup> (12:44).

As a consequence, not accepting Jesus means not accepting God that abides in Jesus (14:23-24). Not knowing Jesus means not knowing the Father (16:2-3).<sup>1135</sup> The disciples of Jesus claim that one needs to accept “the image and reality of God as it becomes present in Jesus.”<sup>1136</sup> The Jews do not accept Jesus; therefore they do not have God with them (8:42, 47).<sup>1137</sup> Therefore, they can be called unbelievers. It is ironic how those who were searching the Scripture for life (5:39) did not see this life when it came into their way (1:10-11; 8:33-59; 14:17). God, the Scriptures and the fathers<sup>1138</sup> whom they call as witnesses testify against them (5:31-47). They call Jesus mad (10:20), similarly to what the wicked do to the righteous in Wis 5:4, but, in fact, they are mad and evil.<sup>1139</sup> The way to God is through Jesus (14:6). This is why while “in the OT the basic sin

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<sup>1133</sup> If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.

<sup>1134</sup> Then Jesus cried aloud: “Whoever believes in me believes not in me but in him who sent me.”

<sup>1135</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 187: the “in-group” and “out-group” are redefined “in terms of Jesus,” with the former referring to those who are born into the family of God.

<sup>1136</sup> Van der Watt, “Salvation in the Gospel according to John,” 104.

<sup>1137</sup> See Ridderbos, *The Gospel of John*, 313-314; van der Watt and Kok, “Violence in a Gospel of Love,” 177-178, who also conclude that believing in the uniqueness of Jesus was essential in order to be accepted into the Johannine group.

<sup>1138</sup> See Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 152-153; Newman and Nida, *A Translator’s Handbook*, 168-169, about the witnesses of Jesus.

<sup>1139</sup> See Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 314, who noted this parallel. Van der Watt and Kok, “Violence in a Gospel of Love,” 160-161: “In the end, the questions will be who the judge is and who determines the norms. According to John, God the Father is the only one capable of judging according to the truth (John 14:6; see also John 18:37-38). He, however, gave the right to judge over to his Son (John 5:22). By implication, the opponents of Jesus are not able to judge fairly.”

is the failure to obey Yahweh, while for John the basic sin is the failure to know and believe in Jesus.<sup>1140</sup>

Now what consequences does belief or unbelief in Jesus have on the value system of human beings? The believer's value system is governed by the value JESUS IS UP; therefore all their values are measured against Jesus.<sup>1141</sup> He does not only declare God, but he declares all the values as well: Jesus is the truth (8:46; 14:6), law (1:17; chaps. 5, 8),<sup>1142</sup> revelation (1:18), love (15:9-10), light (1:3-9), and power (19:11), in one word, life (3:15-17). The believers who follow Jesus acquire not only life, but all these values; their attitude, behaviour, acting and way of living changes according to the new life (12:25-26; 13:4-17; 14:12; 15:14-19; 17:18; 20:21-23).<sup>1143</sup> They become distinct from the world (17:14, 16), and spiritually belong to the divine reality. They experience a fate similar to that of the righteous in Wis where the righteous' different manner of life is inconvenient for the wicked because the righteous accuses the wicked (Wis 2:12-16). Therefore, the righteous is tortured and killed (Wis 2:19-20, cf. John 15:20).

ὅτι δὲ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου οὐκ ἐστέ, ἀλλ' ἐγὼ ἐξελεξάμην ὑμᾶς ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου,  
διὰ τοῦτο μισεῖ ὑμᾶς ὁ κόσμος.<sup>1144</sup> (15:19cd).

While the believers see everything through Jesus' eyes, the whole system of the unbelievers is influenced by the fact that they lack Jesus. The Gospel argues that true values have to be

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<sup>1140</sup> Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:10; cf. Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 89-92.

<sup>1141</sup> Jan G. van der Watt, "Ethics through the Power of Language: Some Explorations in the Gospel according to John," in *Moral Language in the New Testament: The Interrelatedness of Language and Ethics in Early Christian Writings*, ed. Jan G. van der Watt, Ruben Zimmermann and Susanne Luther, vol. 2 of *Kontexte und Normen neutestamentlicher Ethik = Contexts and Norms of New Testament Ethics*, WUNT 2/296 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 140: faith in Jesus is "the central ethical action in the Gospel." Relation to Jesus will thereafter define one's behaviour and actions (van der Watt, "Ethics through the Power of Language," 140-141).

<sup>1142</sup> For the problems (and solutions to) Johannine ethics, see Jan G. van der Watt, "Radical Social Redefinition and Radical Love: Ethics and Ethos in the Gospel according to John," in *Identity, Ethics, and Ethos in the New Testament*, ed. Jan G. van der Watt and François S. Malan, BZNW 141 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2006), 107-133, who says that the Johannine group interpreted the law in "light of the presence of Jesus" (129).

<sup>1143</sup> See Jan G. van der Watt, "Ethics of/and the Opponents of Jesus in John's Gospel," in van der Watt and Zimmermann, *Rethinking the Ethics of John*, 175-191; Ruben Zimmermann, "Is There Ethics in the Gospel of John? Challenging an Outdated Consensus," in van der Watt and Zimmermann, *Rethinking the Ethics of John*, 44-80.

<sup>1144</sup> Because you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world—therefore the world hates you.

measured against God,<sup>1145</sup> but these values are communicated through Jesus: πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας (1:14).<sup>1146</sup> In absence of Jesus, whatever truth, grace, love, life the unbelievers have is not authentic and not saving (5:19-47). Just two examples: the value MORE IS BETTER has different meaning in the context of the unbelievers and in the context of Jesus' revelation. For in the former it refers to the loving of earthly life (12:25a) or loving of own truth, right, etc. (chap. 8), as opposed to that of Jesus. In the latter perception *more* refers to the true values Jesus gives, to the true existence (12:25b). Similarly, POWER IS BETTER becomes a two-sided coin since it may refer to either the power received from God (1:12) or worldly power that has no real strength (19:11).

### 3.1.2.3 Life in Contrast to Judgment and Perishing

Earthly life is pictured as a journey that ends with physical death (3:14; 8:28; 11:9-10, 25; 12:32, 34-35; 13:36). Physical death is a departure either to the Father's house or to perishing. Those who believe will have life with God (3:16-17, 36; 6:40, 47; 13:1, 3; 12:32; 14:1-4, 12, 28; 16:5, 10, 28; 17:11, 13; 20:31), while those who do not believe will be judged and will perish (3:16-19; 36; 5:24; 8:24). As we have said, in order to see clearly what eternal life is, we have to see the antithetical concepts as well. 3:16-18, 36 and 5:24 set judgment and perishing in opposition to life:

οὕτως γὰρ ἠγάπησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν κόσμον, ὥστε τὸν υἱὸν τὸν μονογενῆ ἔδωκεν,  
 ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν μὴ ἀπόληται ἀλλ' ἔχῃ ζωὴν αἰώνιον.  
 οὐ γὰρ ἀπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν υἱὸν εἰς τὸν κόσμον

<sup>1145</sup> Van der Watt, *Introduction*, 30.

<sup>1146</sup> See Ridderbos, *The Gospel of John*, 192. Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 111: πλήρωμα in John 1:16 was frequently explained against Gnostic background. See Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 77 n. 1; Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 140. But Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 111-112, finds some sapiential material that reflects the idea of fullness, i.e. of God's creative work (Ps 23:1 LXX), God's glory filling the earth (Ps 71:19), the earth filled with creatures by the work of wisdom (Ps 103:24), wisdom filling the world (Wis 1:7), or the goodness of God in the creation (Ps 32:5; 118:64). Note that Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, liv, already paralleled πλήρωμα in John 1:16 with Wis 7:11, 12. Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:416 n. 504, also mentions Wis 3:4 where it is said that the righteous' "hope is full of immortality."

ἵνα κρίνη τὸν κόσμον, ἀλλ' ἵνα σωθῇ ὁ κόσμος δι' αὐτοῦ<sup>1147</sup> (3:16-17).

God's act of creation has consequences on the creation itself. God has power over the earth (19:11); he is more powerful than the devil (12:31). His power includes the power and authority to save and judge.<sup>1148</sup> Although these verses underline the idea of salvation, they also make us understand that perishing and judgment go together. And both ἀπόλλυμι (3:16) and κρίνω (3:17; also 3:18; 5:24) are set against life.

This is exactly the conclusion of 5:24:

Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν

ὅτι ὁ τὸν λόγον μου ἀκούων

καὶ πιστεύων τῷ πέμψαντί με

ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον

καὶ εἰς κρίσιν οὐκ ἔρχεται,

ἀλλὰ μεταβέβηκεν ἐκ τοῦ θανάτου εἰς τὴν ζωὴν.<sup>1149</sup>

Judgment and death are set in opposition to life; those who are not judged will not share death.<sup>1150</sup> Ἀλλὰ emphasizes that the opposite of judgment happens to those who believe.<sup>1151</sup> The believers have reached the *location* of life (5:24)<sup>1152</sup> and since they are not judged, their state will not change: they will not perish, but continue living.

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<sup>1147</sup> For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

<sup>1148</sup> For a detailed description of God in John, see Thompson, *The God of the Gospel of John*, who says that God is defined by his functions and prerogatives, primarily as Creator and giver of life, which are assigned to Jesus; therefore, conferring Jesus' uniqueness (52-54). See also D. Francois Tolmie, "The Characterization of God in the Fourth Gospel," *JSNT* 20 (1998): 57-75.

<sup>1149</sup> Very truly, I tell you, anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life, and does not come under judgment, but has passed from death to life.

<sup>1150</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 212, referring to 3:18, says that judgment "functions as an antithetical parallelism to having life. Life and judgment are linked as two opposite poles."

<sup>1151</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:653: "'Passing' from death to life, like being 'born from above' (3:3), implies a line of demarcation between those who have returned to God's side and those who remain arrayed against him (cf. 1 John 3:14; Wis 7:27; Col 1:13)."

<sup>1152</sup> See the description of the metaphor at LIFE IS A JOURNEY.



9:39 seems to annul the opposition between judgment and life. It seems that there is judgment for all; how do we interpret this in view of 3:16-18; 5:24?

Καὶ εἶπεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς·

εἰς κρίμα ἐγὼ εἰς τὸν κόσμον τοῦτον ἦλθον,

ἵνα οἱ μὴ βλέποντες βλέπωσιν

καὶ οἱ βλέποντες τυφλοὶ γένωνται.<sup>1153</sup>

The answer is that the different connotations of κρίνω, κρίμα, κρίσις (judgment, condemnation)<sup>1154</sup> are not overlapping in the Gospel. What we see in 9:39 can be paralleled with 3:19-20 and 9:41; 15:22-24: Jesus came into the world to expose the good and the evil.<sup>1155</sup> The *blind* recalls *the world in darkness* to which the light has come (1:5-9); if they believe in Jesus, they do not remain in darkness, but have life.<sup>1156</sup> The presence of Jesus as light is itself judgment: αὕτη δέ ἐστιν ἡ κρίσις<sup>1157</sup> (3:19a).<sup>1158</sup> Jesus' appearance divided humankind into believers and unbelievers and, thus, set judgment on them: ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν οὐ κρίνεται· ὁ δὲ μὴ πιστεύων ἤδη κέκριται<sup>1159</sup> (3:18). That is why the Gospel can say that the one who believes "has passed from death to life"; the believers become the children of God and have life (3:18, cf. 1:12-13). Judgment in this sense is not necessarily the opposition of life, but it only refers to examination. The believers are safe because they have undergone judgment (5:24) and they will not be judged again (5:28-29; 12:47-48).<sup>1160</sup> Therefore, they will continue living. On the contrary, the unbelievers will be judged and they die. Here judgment is related to perishing

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<sup>1153</sup> Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind."

<sup>1154</sup> See Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:134, that points out that κρίνω may be used for judgment or condemnation.

<sup>1155</sup> Newman and Nida, *A Translator's Handbook*, 319: "the term judge does not refer here to pronouncing condemnation or innocence, nor is it a reference to final judgment. It is a reference to the exposure of sins."

<sup>1156</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:250: the image of spiritual light and blindness comes from the OT; see esp. Isa 6:9-10.

<sup>1157</sup> And this is the judgment.

<sup>1158</sup> Anderson, *Riddles*, 30: "From the perspective of eternity, one's response to the divine Word becomes its own form of judgment—both confirming and disconfirming."

<sup>1159</sup> Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already.

<sup>1160</sup> See van der Watt, *Introduction*, 76.

and it serves as antithesis to life (3:16-18).<sup>1161</sup> This sense of judgment is condemnation; it finalizes the unbelievers' relationship with the evil and death. They will never be with God and therefore they will not have life, but perish. Condemnation (and also death), therefore, just like evil<sup>1162</sup> is a relational concept: rejection from or inability to be part of the family of God, and be part of the family of the devil (8:44, 47).<sup>1163</sup> Therefore similarly to life, judgment also starts in one's earthly life (12:31)<sup>1164</sup> and will be completed on the last day (12:47-48).<sup>1165</sup> 3:18-19 very clearly shows that both life and judgment are already here.<sup>1166</sup> Those who believe are not condemned, therefore they live, whereas those who do not believe are already condemned and they die.<sup>1167</sup> Eternal life will come to completion in resurrection, while judgment in perishing. When they are resurrected, the believers go on living because they have already received life (5:24), while the unbelievers are condemned and perish because they have not received life (3:18, 36).

What does perishing refer to? Since life is defined as life with God,<sup>1168</sup> ἀπόλλυμι also becomes a relational term: it expresses that the unbelievers perish because they are not part of the family of God, but part of the devil's family (8:43-44).<sup>1169</sup> This notion of death implies not mortality, but "a total loss of salvation."<sup>1170</sup> The unbelievers are not related to God; therefore they will not have life. John does not explicitly say what happens to the unbelievers after judgment, whether eternal suffering awaits them or they cease to exist. But since here, too, life is defined in terms of communion with God (1:12-13; 3:3, 5; 14:20; 15:4-5, 7; 17:21, 23, 26), and the unbelievers are

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<sup>1161</sup> Whenever we use judgment in relation to death, we understand it in the sense of condemnation.

<sup>1162</sup> See Koester, *The Word of Life*, 65-66.

<sup>1163</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 211-212.

<sup>1164</sup> See Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 154-157. If judgment happens only after death, it contradicts the concept of life-already-present.

<sup>1165</sup> We do not intend to clarify the question whether there is another judgment for all in the moment of death or on the last day. The point we want to make is that only judgment in the sense of condemnation opposes the idea of life, since this separates one from God.

<sup>1166</sup> See Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 104.

<sup>1167</sup> See Newman and Nida, *A Translator's Handbook*, 158.

<sup>1168</sup> See the discussion on creation and the metaphor of abiding.

<sup>1169</sup> See the detailed discussion of Jesus' judgment in 8:21-59 in Neyrey, *The Gospel of John in Cultural and Rhetorical Perspective*, 227-251.

<sup>1170</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 212.

denied to be part of the family of God (8:44, 47), we can say that the unbelievers stop to exist, at least in the sense which defines existence as being in the realm of God.<sup>1171</sup>

3:36 continues the opposition of life and death adding another aspect to it:

ὁ πιστεύων εἰς τὸν υἱὸν ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον·  
ὁ δὲ ἀπειθῶν τῷ υἱῷ οὐκ ὄψεται ζωὴν,  
ἀλλ' ἡ ὀργὴ τοῦ θεοῦ μένει ἐπ' αὐτόν.<sup>1172</sup>

Life is contrasted with the wrath of God by the verse itself, but the context (ὁ πατήρ ἀγαπᾷ τὸν υἱὸν—3:35a) also contrasts the love of God with his wrath. Thus life and love are contrasted with death and wrath.<sup>1173</sup> So the text does not only say that they “will not see life” but it also adds that they “must endure God’s wrath,” thereby showing another aspect of death, i.e. death as punishment.<sup>1174</sup>

### 3.2 The Concept of Life in John—Eternal life as Relation with God

In the following chapter I would like to illustrate that eternal life is a relational concept in the Gospel. We have already seen signs of this whenever the text links eternal life to following Jesus. Hereby I will explore this aspect of life by analysing the different metaphors that structure life in terms of relationship with God. What we will see is that those who believe in Jesus receive life. Through being born of God, they become children of God and they start living in the family

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<sup>1171</sup> Therefore the concept of eternal death seems to be close to that in Wis’ and Philo’s eschatology: the wicked simply perish, cease to exist forever. See Ramelli and Konstan, *Terms for Eternity*, 55-57, for the wicked’s destiny in Philo. Because of this idea of death, we can use *eternal death* and *ultimate death* in John, as well, interchangeably.

<sup>1172</sup> Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever disobeys the Son will not see life, but must endure God’s wrath.

<sup>1173</sup> See Schogren, *EDB*, 1393.

<sup>1174</sup> Does “they will endure God’s wrath” and “they will not see life” refer to the same things? Or the wrath of God is some more punishing added to death? Newman and Nida, *A Translator’s Handbook*, 105, points out that the wrath of God “does not refer primarily to God’s feelings (as might be suggested by such a translation as ‘God’s anger’). Rather, it refers to God’s action in judging and punishing men for their sins.” Thus, not only the idea of dying but the idea of death as punishment may also be implied. Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 211: “Those who do not believe will suffer the consequences of the wrath of God, apart from the fact that they will not see eternal life.” For the wrath of God in Jewish literature, see Isa 34:2; Jdt 9:9; 1 Esd 8:21; 1QS 4:12; 1 En. 62:12; Sib. Or. 5:75–77.

of God in unity with Father and Son. The life they receive when they are spiritually born qualitatively corresponds to the life of God; this makes the believers be able to participate in the life of God. Thus eternal life on the one hand becomes the quality of the communion with God in the Gospel (15:4-5), but on the other hand, life is also the condition of being part of the divine (3:3, 5). And here it is the richness of the metaphors. The concept of life is viewed as an entity that can be given as a gift, a location in which the believers are, or a final destination. Because of these metaphors eternal life is a state but also a purpose, the gift of God but also the quality of the believer, the condition of the relationship with God but also the result of it. All these metaphors reflect different sides of the communion with God.

From the presence on earth, the believers *move* to the presence in the family of God. The metaphor LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE perceives earthly life as a bounded region.<sup>1175</sup> Because of this conception of life, it is possible that eternal life is elaborated by the metaphors *being in the hand of God*, *being in love*, or *abiding in Jesus* that perceive abstract concepts and even the person of Jesus and God as containers. The unity between the believers and the members of the divine family is expressed by the concepts of abiding in God and Jesus, abiding in the love of God. But there is more to say about life. Via the Great Chain Metaphor we understand that divine characteristics and behaviour are described through human characteristics and behaviour. LIFE IS BEING PRESENT HERE is combined with the Great Chain Metaphor, and thus, eternal life and coming into possession of this life can be described in terms of human categories, like birth, having life, being a child, being in the hand of God. But the concept of eternal life is even more complex: the concepts of light, knowledge and peace also define life making our understanding of eternal life more thorough. As a result of all these combinations, eternal life in John is defined in its many aspects as presence in the realm of God.

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<sup>1175</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 98.

### 3.2.1 Life as Presence and Destination

Eternal life has already been labelled as presence and also as destination. This seems to be an incongruence,<sup>1176</sup> which also appears in 5:24:

Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν

ὅτι ὁ τὸν λόγον μου ἀκούων

καὶ πιστεύων τῷ πέμψαντί με

ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον

καὶ εἰς κρίσιν οὐκ ἔρχεται,

ἀλλὰ μεταβέβηκεν ἐκ τοῦ θανάτου εἰς τὴν ζωὴν.<sup>1177</sup>

The metaphor LIFE IS BEING PRESENT in the realm of God has already been described with regard to the eternity of God and Jesus. It shall now be described in relation to the believers. We have seen that LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE commonly structures earthly life, but combined with metaphors that structure the realm of God, it defines eternal life as existence with God. Several metaphors are combined with LIFE IS BEING PRESENT HERE that define existence with God as being up, being in the hand of God, in the family of God, abiding in God and Jesus, being in love, which give further nuances to the concept of life. All these metaphors structure eternal life as a state of the children of God that enjoy God's life already on earth.<sup>1178</sup> However, eternal life is also seen as destination. The two concepts, presence and destination do not contradict each other, but present two aspects of eternal life.

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<sup>1176</sup> Newman and Nida, *A Translator's Handbook*, 158: "Throughout John's Gospel there is always a tension between present and future. The believer already experiences in some degree the reality of eternal life which he will fully experience only at the end of time, and the one who refuses to believe is presently under God's judgment—a judgment which will be fully manifest only at the end of time."

<sup>1177</sup> Very truly, I tell you, anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life, and does not come under judgment, but has passed from death to life.

<sup>1178</sup> See Koester, *The Word of Life*, 32; Wright, *The Resurrection*, 444.

The first instance where we see eternal life as presence in the life of man is 1:4: there was life in the Logos, and this life was the light of man.<sup>1179</sup> However, as the next verse specifies it, the presence of life in the life of people is conditioned by understanding (1:5). Therefore only those that link to the divine can receive life; in this way it becomes a goal of human life.

In John 3:3, 5, LIFE IS BEING PRESENT HERE is combined with ALIVE IS UP; thus eternal life is viewed as life in the realm of God (12:26; 14:2-4; 17:24). But since the believers are not born into the realm of God naturally, they have to come into possession of this life. Life, thus, appears as a destination that has to be reached through the belief in Jesus (3:14-16; 3:35-36).<sup>1180</sup>

ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ θύρα·  
δι' ἐμοῦ ἐάν τις εἰσέλθῃ σωθήσεται  
καὶ εἰσελεύσεται  
καὶ ἐξελεύσεται  
καὶ νομὴν εὐρήσει.<sup>1181</sup> (10:9).

We can see earthly life structured again in terms of a journey, with Jesus as the right path that leads to the location of eternal life. Eternal life is the destination of those who walk on the right path, or, in other words, eternal life is the state one enters only if he passes through the gate that is Jesus. Although in the case of Jesus<sup>1182</sup> and God eternal life has no notion of arrival and departure because they own this life as an inherent characteristic of their nature, in the case of the believers the situation is different. They have to *arrive* to eternal life since eternal life is not inherent quality of their nature (see also 3:3, 5). Life is further presented as an entity that can

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<sup>1179</sup> See Bernard, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, 1:4-5.

<sup>1180</sup> See also 6:40, 47, 54, 63, 68; 10:28; 11:26; 12:50; 17:2; 20:31.

<sup>1181</sup> I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture.

<sup>1182</sup> Of course this does not apply to the texts that refer to the earthly life of Jesus that also include the notion of arrival and departure. See above at the cosmology.

only be received through Jesus.<sup>1183</sup> The believers do not have life as part of their nature, but they receive it as a gift (4:10; 6:27-58). The relational aspect of eternal life comes again to the fore.

In 4:14 Jesus replaces the well of Jacob with the true well:

ὁς δ' ἂν πίη ἐκ τοῦ ὕδατος οὗ ἐγὼ δώσω αὐτῷ, οὐ μὴ διψήσῃ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα,  
ἀλλὰ τὸ ὕδωρ ὃ δώσω αὐτῷ γενήσεται ἐν αὐτῷ πηγὴ ὕδατος ἀλλομένου εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον.<sup>1184</sup>

Similarly to the well given by Jacob to his son, Joseph (4:5-6), the water given by Jesus is also a gift given by God (4:10; 6:27-58). Since Jesus replaces the well given by a father to his sons, on a metaphorical level this has the implication that Jesus replaces the importance of the Jewish family with that of the new spiritual family of God.<sup>1185</sup> It is God, the father of this spiritual family who provides the true water for his children.<sup>1186</sup> Here we can grasp an agrarian metaphor that presents God as the true source of prosperity and fertility. Only the water given by God gives satisfaction. We understand that water is metaphorical;<sup>1187</sup> but what is the target domain of the source domain water? Jesus gives water, thus water refers to an entity that can be given. And

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<sup>1183</sup> J. Edgar Bruns, "Some Reflections on Coheleth and John," *CBQ* 25 (1963): 414-416, who pointed out the similarities between Qoheleth and John, says that "the Jesus of John's Gospel is the anodyne to this melancholy philosophy of life. Almost all of the 'I AM' sayings in John parallel the negative attitudes of Coheleth" (415).

<sup>1184</sup> "But those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life." Cf. Sir 24:21. In chap. 4 the context is the well of Jacob (see Gen 48:22), while in 7:37-39 it is the Feast of Tabernacles where water and light has a great role.

<sup>1185</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 229-235.

<sup>1186</sup> Koester, *The Word of Life*, 53: "As the narrative unfolds . . . the question of identity comes full circle. People may ask who Jesus is, but their encounters with Jesus also disclose who they are. If he is the light, then the world lies in darkness; if he gives the living water, then people must be thirsty; if he is the bread, then people must hunger. . . . The way that images for people are related to those for Christ reflects an underlying theological perspective, which is that people are to be understood relationally: In John's Gospel human life is seen in relation to Christ and to the God who sent him."

<sup>1187</sup> See Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 138, for the background of the image of water. See also Stovell, "Rivers, Springs, and Wells of Living Water," 461-491, who argues that the Johannine *water of life* reflects both OT and Hellenistic tradition; the different metaphorical usages are combined in the Gospel and the Revelation. Thus "John is able to convey a deeper understanding of the difficult theological truths inherent in his Christological and pneumatological focus. Thus for John, 'living water/water of life' are waters of cleansing, re-creation, sustenance, and a road sign pointing to the ultimate personal and universal eschatological hope of God's reign and the worship of all the nations before his throne" (Stovell, "Rivers, Springs, and Wells of Living Water," 491).

since this water ἀλλομένου εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον, we can say that the target concept is life. On the one hand, αἰώνιος refers to the quality of the new life received;<sup>1188</sup> on the other hand, it indicates the quantity of this life: it has no end, it will not cease at death.<sup>1189</sup> If water is used as a source concept, we have to think of its non-metaphorical features. Water promotes life. So if life is perceived as water, we can understand that the life of God given by Jesus promotes personal life.

Jesus gives water,<sup>1190</sup> but the *water* may also refer to Jesus.<sup>1191</sup> This is not contradictory with the metaphor LIFE IS WATER; we have seen that JESUS IS LIFE, and because LIFE IS WATER, Jesus can be perceived as water. It is because Jesus has the life of God, he can give this life to the believers. If Jesus is the water, drinking is also metaphorical: it means entering into a relationship with Jesus by means of believing in him;<sup>1192</sup> this results in eternal life.<sup>1193</sup> Jesus

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<sup>1188</sup> Sjef van Tilborg, "Cosmological Implications of Johannine Christology," in Van Belle, van der Watt and Maritz, *Theology and Christology in the Fourth Gospel*, 486-487, notes that similarly to the scenes where Jesus is performing an act, 4:7-15 also reveals an alternative world besides the physical one. Besides referring to a physical reality, water also points to the "alternative world" that becomes present in the world through Jesus, and also to Jesus himself.

<sup>1189</sup> Newman and Nida, *A Translator's Handbook*, 88, emphasizes the qualitative aspect, but also considers the quantitative aspect. Ramelli and Konstan, *Terms for Eternity*, 61, 69, argues that the idea of new life or new age is also emphasized in αἰώνιος. See also Guhr, *NIDNTT* 3:832; "αἰώνιος," L&N, ad loc.; "αἰώνιος," UBS, ad loc.; van der Watt, "The Use of Αἰώνιος," 217-228. Van der Watt, "Eschatology in John," 128, defines eternal life in terms of time (without end), "space in time (one *aeon* versus another)" and quality (divine).

<sup>1190</sup> Jesus is the source of living water; cf. Bennema, *The Power of Saving Wisdom*, 185.

<sup>1191</sup> See Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:427-428; van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 231-233; Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 194. Severino Pancaro, *The Law in the Fourth Gospel: The Torah and the Gospel, Moses and Jesus, Judaism and Christianity according to John*, NovTSup 42 (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 479, agrees with Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 186-187, in that "the primary meaning" of the living water is Jesus' revelation. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 195: the water refers to the Spirit. Koester, *The Word of Life*, 63, and Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:178-179, understands water as revelation and spirit. Beasley-Murray, *John*, 60: "the life mediated by the Spirit sent from the (crucified and exalted) Revealer-Redeemer." We would say that all these possible target concepts can be summed up by *life*, since Jesus' revelation and that of the Spirit also leads to life. 7:38 also has different interpretations: the "rivers of living water" which flow out of *him*—Jesus or the believers; see the different interpretations in Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, 298-299; Joel Marcus, "Rivers of Living Water from Jesus' Belly (John 7:38)," *JBL* 117 (1998): 328-330; Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 271; van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 234. Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 194, argues that "rivers of living water" "points to Jesus, the revelation, the new life, and the means by which one enters it, the Spirit." Bennema, *The Power of Saving Wisdom*, 183-184, also pulls together four possible connotations of the "living water" based on OT images: life/salvation, cleansing, gift of the Spirit and wisdom of Jesus.

<sup>1192</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 231, who also notes that thirst is also metaphorical; it refers to spiritual need. See also Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 196. Cf. 7:37-38 where thirst again has metaphorical sense; see John Marsh, *The Gospel of St John*, PGC (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 341).

<sup>1193</sup> See Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, 184.



gives himself to those who believe and becomes a fountain in the believers, and if a fountain resides in the believers, they will not be thirsty again. Thus Jesus does not only give eternal life, but also sustains life in the believers.<sup>1194</sup>

Another significant text that presents life via another agrarian metaphor as the gift of God is 6:27.<sup>1195</sup> It is related to the water metaphor in meaning and structure:<sup>1196</sup>

ἐργάζεσθε μὴ τὴν βρῶσιν τὴν ἀπολλυμένην  
ἀλλὰ τὴν βρῶσιν τὴν μένουσαν εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον,  
ἣν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὑμῖν δώσει·  
τοῦτον γὰρ ὁ πατὴρ ἐσφράγισεν ὁ θεός.<sup>1197</sup>

The context displays the contrast between daily bread<sup>1198</sup> (6:1-11, 26), also the manna Moses gave them in the desert (6:32, 58)<sup>1199</sup> and the bread that Jesus gives.<sup>1200</sup> Life is again perceived as an entity that is owned by Jesus, and it can be given and received.<sup>1201</sup>

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<sup>1194</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 232-233.

<sup>1195</sup> Koester, *The Word of Life*, 38, notices in chap. 6 the image of God as “host at a banquet,” which we would connect to one of the functions of the king that is providing prosperity.

<sup>1196</sup> See Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 195-198.

<sup>1197</sup> Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal.

<sup>1198</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 220: the “work for food” is a metaphor based on the daily task of the Mediterranean people that had to face hunger and thirst quite often. See more about this in the excursus of van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 217-218, who also notes that it was in these times “that God showed himself to be their Saviour from need” (218). Koester, *The Word of Life*, 59: “The images of hunger, thirst, and darkness . . . recognize the need for things that come to people from outside themselves. . . . This pattern enables the images of thirst, hunger, and darkness to function as metaphors for the human need to relate to God in faith. The Gospel uses these images to show that people have an inherent need for God, yet it also discloses that the need may take people away from God and prompt them to seek life in other ways.”

<sup>1199</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 221, notes that manna is the symbol of God’s providence in the OT. Cf. Pancaro, *The Law in the Fourth Gospel*, 455-458. Manna is related to Wisdom and Torah (Sir 24:21f); see Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 137; Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 221-222; Thompson, “Thinking about God,” 227; Beasley-Murray, *John*, 92; Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 240-242; Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 224; Peder Borgen, *Bread from Heaven: An Exegetical Study of the Concept of Manna in the Gospel of John and the Writings of Philo*, NovTSup 10 (Leiden: Brill, 1965), 154-158. For Wis parallel, see Wis 16:20, 26.

<sup>1200</sup> Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 156, says that the barley loaves are “an echo of the barley loaves in the account of Elisha’s feeding a multitude” (2 Kgs 4:42-44). “The feeding of the multitude—in the wilderness, at the time of

Anderson, arguing for the unity of chapter 6,<sup>1202</sup> considers 6:25-66 as a homiletical exhortation (following Borgen, Brown, and Lindars)<sup>1203</sup> that requires a response of faith from the audience. The discourse on the *two ways* of life and death, of which the manna and the *bread of life* (6:27) are the images, also serves as a test. The contrast of the two kinds of bread calls forth taking an attitude: rejecting or accepting the cross of Jesus (6:51-58).<sup>1204</sup>

The imagery of the two ways is described

in *revelational* and *epistemological* terms. The *way of life* involves seeking truth, walking in the light, knowing the Father, believing in the Son, beholding his glory, etc. Similarly, *the way of death* in John involves disobeying the truth, remaining in darkness, not knowing the Father, and thus neither recognizing the Son nor beholding his glory. Vs. 27 therefore serves as the *pivotal fulcrum* of John 6. It builds on the narrative events and the inappropriate response of the crowd, characterized as the desire for bread, rather than

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Passover, with barley loaves—is therefore a clear affirmation in narrative form that Jesus is the fulfilment of Moses and the prophets” (Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 156). This can also be seen in the scene of Jesus’ walking on the sea (Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 158).

<sup>1201</sup> The seemingly paradox 6:63 (It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life) relates to 6:27, referring to the *two ways* (similarly to 6:58, 65); see the connection in Anderson, *Christology*, 210. Beasley-Murray, *John*, 96, says that the emphasis is “on the life-giving Spirit”: “The flesh alone, even of the Son of Man, does not achieve the end which God has purposed, namely of giving life to the world.” But Beasley-Murray seems to miss the emphasis put on Jesus’ words, “the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.” Thus, the flesh is contrasted with the words of Jesus that are spirit and life. This is also supported by 6:68 where an equivalent expression is found. Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 227: “The relation between words and spirit is that the revelation of Jesus is also the revelation of the Spirit.” Further, Jesus says this after the disciples do not understand him; the setting is similar to the discussion with Nicodemus in chap. 3. Thus, it could be paralleled with 3:6: “What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit.” No one can receive life except the one who is born from above, of the Spirit; man by himself cannot enter the Kingdom of God. This interpretation is strengthened by the parallel between 6:61-62 and 3:12: if you don’t understand earthly things, what would happen if I told you heavenly things. Thus, the verse may simply mean that what Jesus reveals has effect and this effect is eternal life compared to the earthly bread that has no life in it.

<sup>1202</sup> Anderson, *Christology*, 87-89.

<sup>1203</sup> See Lindars, *The Gospel of John*; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*; Borgen, *Bread from Heaven*.

<sup>1204</sup> Anderson, *Christology*, 194-220. Cf. testing in Wis 3:5c-6; 11:10. Anderson, *Christology*, 203: John parallels the manna—flesh motifs of Exod 16 and Num 11, developed in Ps 78, except that the question here is different: it is not whether one is grateful for manna, but whether one recognizes that the Bread of Life is “God’s provision”; this “shifts the locus of import from that which is given to *the one who gives*.” Accordingly, as Anderson, *Christology*, 204, puts it, idolatry is not to recognize God’s gift in Jesus.

Bread; and it sets the stage for the following interpretation, which from dialogues to discourses develops homiletically the Johannine version of the ‘two ways.’<sup>1205</sup>

The answer to the question raised by the exhortation should be simple: only the bread provided by Jesus means eternal life (6:35)<sup>1206</sup> because he is the bread of life (6:35, 48).<sup>1207</sup> “The familial reference to the Father who is the real supplier is significant.<sup>1208</sup> Having eternal life means to be born into the family of God. They need food, which their Father must supply. God does exactly that by sending Jesus.”<sup>1209</sup> Thus bread serves as a metaphor for Jesus. The true bread is “that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world” (6:33).<sup>1210</sup> The true bread gives life (6:27),<sup>1211</sup> but the bread itself has life (6:51).<sup>1212</sup> The target concept of bread is Jesus; he identifies himself as the living bread<sup>1213</sup> that makes the believers live by entering into relationship with him (6:27, 35; see also 6:41, 48, 51).

ὁ τρώγων μου τὴν σάρκα καὶ πίνων μου τὸ αἷμα ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον,  
καὶ γὰρ ἀναστήσω αὐτὸν τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ.<sup>1214</sup> (6:54).

The metaphor of bread has now turned into *flesh and blood*. *Eating* (6:50, 51, 53, 56, 57, 58), similarly to *drinking*, refers to believing in Jesus;<sup>1215</sup> John 6:35 (also 6:32-58) clearly associates

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<sup>1205</sup> Anderson, *Christology*, 200. For the situation of the Johannine community and the crisis behind to which the Bread of Life discourse reflects, see Paul N. Anderson, “The *Sitz im Leben* of the Johannine Bread of Life Discourse and Its Evolving Context,” in Culpepper, *Critical Readings of John 6*, 1-59.

<sup>1206</sup> Van Tilborg, “Cosmological Implications of Johannine Christology,” 489: in the story of the multiplication of bread the “alternative world of Jesus” is present again.

<sup>1207</sup> Cf. Gary M. Burge, *The Anointed Community: The Holy Spirit in the Johannine Tradition* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 105.

<sup>1208</sup> The desire of the unbelievers for daily bread can be paralleled with the wicked that seek worldly pleasures in Wis 2 [own reference].

<sup>1209</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 221.

<sup>1210</sup> See Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 223-224, for the background of the bread of life.

<sup>1211</sup> See John Painter, “Jesus and the Quest for Eternal Life,” in Culpepper, *Critical Readings of John 6*, 78.

<sup>1212</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 222-223. See Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 227.

<sup>1213</sup> See Pancaro, *The Law in the Fourth Gospel*, 458-459, for the possible interpretations of the bread of life.

<sup>1214</sup> Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day.

<sup>1215</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 223-224: if we look at the parallel between 6:47 and 6:58—see Rudolf Schnackenburg, *Das Johannesevangelium*, 4 vols., HThKNT 4 (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1965-1984), 2:58 for the parallel—, we understand that “metaphorically eating can be substituted for *believing*. As eating presupposes contact between bread and the eater, faith causes the relationship between Jesus and the believer.” Cf. Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 218-237. See Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 163; Borgen, *Bread from*

eating bread and belief in Jesus.<sup>1216</sup> There is a conceptual metaphor that relates mental activities to food. IDEAS ARE FOOD<sup>1217</sup> lets us view eternal life as bread; thus eating bread means accepting Jesus and believing. Believing in Jesus results in mutual abiding (6:56; see also John 14:20; 15:4; 17:21) and eternal life with Jesus and the Father. The eternal life is, therefore, participation in the life of God through Christ.<sup>1218</sup> Once the believers start to believe, they receive life:

ὁ πιστεύων εἰς τὸν υἱὸν ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον·  
ὁ δὲ ἀπειθῶν τῷ υἱῷ οὐκ ὄψεται ζωὴν,  
ἀλλ' ἡ ὀργὴ τοῦ θεοῦ μένει ἐπ' αὐτόν.<sup>1219</sup> (3:36).

The present tense of ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον points to an already established communion between the believers and God, which makes them be part of the above even during their earthly life. This implies the imminent realization of life.<sup>1220</sup> The future tense of οὐκ ὄψεται points to “the denial

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Heaven; Burge, *The Anointed Community*, 178-189, who advocate the cultic aspect of *eating*. On the contrary, Anderson, *Christology*, 134, claims that “it should be acknowledged that *nowhere* does John advocate a sacramental view of the eucharist cast in the form of an institutional rite, an ordinance of Jesus, or a magical view of the theophagic rites of Mystery Religions—even in John 6:51-58! Rather, the ultimate ‘sacrament’ for John is the *incarnation*, and to ‘eat and drink’ the ‘flesh and blood’ of Jesus is to assimilate the salvific reality of the incarnation by faith and communal faithfulness. In God’s Word become flesh, the world is drawn to God by means of a believing relationship with Jesus.”

<sup>1216</sup> See Anderson, *Christology*, 205. Bennema, *The Power of Saving Wisdom*, 200, also argues for the metaphorical meaning of eating as believing.

<sup>1217</sup> See Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 73-74.

<sup>1218</sup> G. R. Beasley-Murray, *Gospel of Life: Theology in the Fourth Gospel*, PaytL, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991), 4. Cf. van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 205. See more about this aspect of life below.

<sup>1219</sup> Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever disobeys the Son will not see life, but must endure God's wrath.

<sup>1220</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 206: “The implication of receiving life is that it is realized straight away.” See also Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:162; Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 190; Newman and Nida, *A Translator’s Handbook*, 105. Contrary to Ramelli and Konstan, *Terms for Eternity*, 63-64, who say that in every case ζωὴ αἰώνιος refers to the life in the age to come (3:15-16; 5:24; 6:40, 47; 12:25; 13:48). However, we have seen that the metaphors that structure life (ALIVE IS UP, LIFE IS PRESENCE, and other metaphors that we discuss in the followings) perceive life as a state in which the believers are already being present. Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 431, says that the evangelist’s language “serves to eliminate” traditional future eschatology. Ramelli and Konstan are right in saying that αἰώνιος is the characteristics of another αἰών, but this αἰών is already present in the believers. The contrast between the two αἰώνες does not consist in a contrast based on temporality (present—future), but in quality (below, without Jesus, earthly life—up, with Jesus, eternal life). Thus, although eternal life that is the quality of it will be completed with the resurrection in the future (5:28-29; 6:39, 40, 44, 54; 17:24), life in John is already present in the believers. “ζωή,” BDAG, ad loc.: ἀνάστασις ζωῆς (5:29) does not mean “a resurrection to enter life” (cf. 2 Macc 7:14), but “a resurrection

of the future life”<sup>1221</sup> for those who disobey. Thus eternal life is not awaited with the future, but it is already in possession of those who believe in Jesus since Jesus brought life into the world (5:24; 4:14; 6:47; 17:3).<sup>1222</sup>

Eternal life also has future aspect: while already present in the believers, it will be completed in the future (6:39-40, 44, 54)<sup>1223</sup> that is the believers will “increase in their experience of being part of the family of God”<sup>1224</sup> in the Father’s house (14:2-3). The metaphors LIFE IS A JOURNEY and DEATH IS DEPARTURE TO A FINAL DESTINATION conceive of this aspect of eternal life.<sup>1225</sup> At the moment of physical death the believer leaves towards the place prepared for him by Jesus (14:2).<sup>1226</sup>

### 3.2.2 Eternal Life as the Cause of Individual Life

When describing the metaphor LIFE IS A POSSESSION we distinguished between individual life and the general phenomenon of eternal life; this latter is the cause of individual life. But how should we understand this? Do we find a metaphor that supports this? This aspect of the concept of eternal life does not seem so obvious in the text, but it is worth trying to elaborate it because it adds another nuance to our understanding of life.

We should repeat what we have said above when discussing life as presence in the family of God. Earthly life is perceived as presence on the earth, while eternal life is perceived as presence

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*proceeding from life.*” For the presence of eternal life in the believers, see also H.-G. Link, “ζωή,” *NIDNTT* 2:482; Guhrt, *NIDNTT* 3:832; R. Bultmann, “Zōē,” *TDNT*, 295-296.

<sup>1221</sup> Beasley-Murray, *John*, 54.

<sup>1222</sup> As Beasley-Murray, *Gospel of Life*, 4, rightly points out: “He [the evangelist] has grasped and carried to the limit the profound truth, expressed elsewhere in the New Testament, that eschatology is Christology.” Nevertheless, eternal life has both present and future dimension; see Beasley-Murray, *Gospel of Life*, 4-5; Jörg Frey, “Eschatology in the Johannine Circle,” in Van Belle, van der Watt and Maritz, *Theology and Christology in the Fourth Gospel*, 47-82.

<sup>1223</sup> Jan G. van der Watt, “A New Look at John 5:25-9 in the Light of the Use of the Term ‘Eternal Life’ in the Gospel according to John,” *Neot* 19 (1985): 78, notes that not life itself, but its effects will increase in the future. Since our topic is the concept of life, we do not deal with resurrection and with the question in what sense resurrection is the completion of this life.

<sup>1224</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 436.

<sup>1225</sup> See more about this above at the description of earthly life.

<sup>1226</sup> For the question of present and future eschatology, see also Anderson, *Riddles*, 32-34.

in the family of God. Both earthly and eternal life is structured in terms of presence; the difference lies in the two locations of presence: the earth and the family of God. While earthly life ends in death, life in the family of God is eternal. How can one surpass the limitedness of human life and enter the family of God where his life does not end? Eternal life is understood in terms of presence in God's realm. This is not an ordinary presence, so man needs the special gift of God in order to be present in God's realm; he needs eternal life. In this instance eternal life is seen both as result and condition of being with God. No one can be with God if he does not possess the quality of the life of God, e.g. eternity (3:3, 5). To conclude, man can only surpass the transience of human life if he receives eternal life (3:16-17, 36; 5:24). Eternal death means that one is not able to surpass the limitedness of human life because of lack of eternal life, and thus perishes. The believers go on living because they have received life (5:24). Eternal life is, thus, defined (3:16-17, 36; 5:24) as an entity that saves the believers from judgment and death; eternal life results in individual life or existence. In other words, the individuals (the believers) can live forever because a general phenomenon of eternal life exists.

Via EVENTS ARE ACTIONS we understand how this works.<sup>1227</sup> As it was said, this is a generic metaphor that views events in terms of actions. The EVENTS ARE ACTIONS metaphor structures those concepts that have an event shape and a casual structure.<sup>1228</sup> The event shape here is that an entity reaches a final state (presence in God's realm). The causal shape is that receiving eternal life results in individual life or we can also say that life makes people live. Here the general phenomenon of life (that is not dying) is perceived as the cause that leads to the event of individual life. But we have one problem: the EVENTS ARE ACTIONS metaphor presupposes a personification. If we look at the texts that speak about life, we do not find personification; life appears everywhere as an entity or container (e.g. in the metaphor LIFE IS PRESENCE), but we do not see it personified. When Jesus is presented as life and light, there life and light are source concepts, and thus, they are not personifications. However, the idea of life as an agent may be indirectly implied in all those texts. And we may find something if we look at τὸ φῶς τῆς ζωῆς (8:12) more closely. We are analysing this verse below, so here we only look at one aspect of it:

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<sup>1227</sup> The metaphor was explained in the context of Wis 6:19.

<sup>1228</sup> See Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 72-80; Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 49-50.

life that is interpreted here as light that gives life.<sup>1229</sup> Via the metaphor LIFE IS LIGHT we can understand that light is mapped into life. One property of the source concept light is that light promotes growth. If we map this into life, we can understand life as an entity that promotes growth, i.e. gives life. So at the end we have a metaphorical construction that understands eternal life in terms of the general phenomenon of life and individual life: it is because the general phenomenon of eternal life exists (of course, related to God) that human beings can receive life. Similar idea we find in 1:4: the life of the Logos was the light of men. The life was light, i.e. the life of the Logos made people live. In 14:19 Jesus says: ὅτι ἐγὼ ζῶ καὶ ὑμεῖς ζήσετε.<sup>1230</sup> Jesus has eternal life; because of this, he can mediate eternal life to those that follow him. So it is because the general phenomenon of eternal life exists that the believers can receive life.

12:25 distinguishes between earthly life, human life and eternal life; human life is not equated with earthly life, since it implies the possibility of eternal life as well. The text also distinguishes between individual life and the general phenomenon of life by saying that those who hate their earthly life will keep their (individual) life for eternal life (general phenomenon). So the idea that there is a general phenomenon of life that leads to individual life appears here, too. The other support of the presence of this metaphor comes from the presence of its antithesis where eternal death is perceived as thief that steals individual life. When life is perceived as a precious possession in 12:25 that also implies that death is perceived as a thief that steals life. Jesus says that “those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life.”<sup>1231</sup> This implies that individual life is not lost by physical death since it can be kept for eternal life; it is eternal death that steals life. This is strengthened by the images of the devil as a thief (10:10) and a murderer (8:44) who takes away and destroys lives.

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<sup>1229</sup> Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:241: “life that becomes light, light that is a vital force.”

<sup>1230</sup> Because I live, you also will live.

<sup>1231</sup> Cf. Ridderbos, *The Gospel of John*, 432.

### 3.2.3 Abide in Life

Most of the metaphors discussed in this chapter perceive life as a bounded region, the space where human beings are in.<sup>1232</sup> The *be in*-formulas (Immanenzformeln) describe that Jesus is in God and God is in Jesus; those who abide in Jesus will also be in Jesus and God (6:56; 10:38; 14:10-11, 20; 15:4-5, 7; 17:21, 23, 26).<sup>1233</sup> Here human beings, Jesus, but also God is perceived as containers.<sup>1234</sup> But there is more to this metaphor. LIFE IS BEING PRESENT HERE is combined with the Great Chain Metaphor. Jesus and God are perceived as containers in which another entity, another person, is kept:

ἵνα γνῶτε καὶ γινώσκητε

ὅτι ἐν ἐμοὶ ὁ πατήρ

καὶ γὰρ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ<sup>1235</sup> (10:38c).

Via the Great Chain Metaphor we can understand that higher order beings (God, Jesus) are understood in terms of lower order beings (complex objects, i.e. container that contains something), and higher order relations are also understood in terms of lower order relations. The Nature of Things theory combined with the Great Chain points out that complex objects have structural attributes that lead to functional behaviour<sup>1236</sup>—these are the highest level attributes of the source that are used according to the Maxim of Quantity.<sup>1237</sup> Accordingly, if the unity of God and Jesus is perceived as a complex object, we have to think of the functional property of this relation.<sup>1238</sup> Thus *abide in me* describes functional unity, thinking and acting in a similar way

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<sup>1232</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 98.

<sup>1233</sup> Newman and Nida, *A Translator's Handbook*, 209: μένω, *remain* is a very important term for John that indicates the relationship between the Father and Son, but also the believers and the Son.

<sup>1234</sup> See Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 29-30, for container metaphors.

<sup>1235</sup> So that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.

<sup>1236</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 171.

<sup>1237</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 173.

<sup>1238</sup> Addressing the question of equality-subordination, Anderson, *Riddles*, 29, draws attention to the “rhetorical emphasis” that is “the reason the Father and Son are presented as being in relationship has to do with the agency of the Son. He is to be equated with the Father precisely because he is sent from the Father; to receive him is to receive the Father, but to reject him is to forfeit the approval of the One who sent him.”



(13:12-17; 14:23-24).<sup>1239</sup> That the container and contained switch (e.g. sometimes the text says that Jesus is in God, at other times it says that God is in Jesus) shows that the metaphor has to be taken as referring to functionality; *God is in Jesus* and *Jesus is in God* probably means the same that is unity in thinking and acting (5:19; 8:28-29; 10:37-38; 11:22; 14:10-11).<sup>1240</sup> The Son is educated by the Father (5:19-30);<sup>1241</sup> he carries out the Father's will (4:34; 6:38-39; 10:25;<sup>1242</sup> 12:49-50; 14:31; 17:4, 6-8; 18:11),<sup>1243</sup> and he does this with the Father (8:28-29; 10:37-38; 14:10-11).<sup>1244</sup> Thus, the Father can be experienced through his actions in Jesus (5:17-30).<sup>1245</sup> Whenever Christ acts and speaks, it is the action and words of the Father he communicates: ἡ ἐμὴ διδασχὴ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐμὴ ἀλλὰ τοῦ πέμψαντός με<sup>1246</sup> (7:16b). The metaphor also expresses

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<sup>1239</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 210. Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 194, says that "I in the Father and the Father in me," is conceived as a dynamic and not a static relation; it consists in an activity originating with the Father and manifested in the Son. It may be described as obedience to the word of the Father, or imitation of His works, but at bottom it is nothing so external as mere obedience or imitation. It is the sharing of one life, which is of course life eternal or absolute."

<sup>1240</sup> Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 210-211: "the prologue affirms a metaphysical union and Jesus repeatedly affirms that he acts at the direction of the Father (a moral union). This moral union is also possible for all believers."

<sup>1241</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 207: "Jesus' ability to give life is based on his intimate relation to the Father. . . . Jesus sees and hears (what God does) and acts accordingly because he does not seek to fulfill his own will, but the will of his Father, the one who has sent him (see 7:15-16). Consequently the Son is given ability to give life as the Father does." Nevertheless, Jesus has real authority. Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 208: "The fact that Jesus can give life to whom he wants to (5:21), emphasizes the reality of the participation in the power and knowledge of the Father by Jesus (see also 3:34-35). In the same way Jesus judges in absolute accordance with the judgment of the Father (5:30), to such an extent that John can state that the Father does not judge anymore (5:22)." For the authority of Jesus, see also van der Watt, "Salvation in the Gospel according to John," 109-113; Beasley-Murray, *John*, 75.

<sup>1242</sup> In 10:25-32 the unity between Father and Son is expressed in terms of *works*; the same holds for the believers; see Weidemann, "The Victory of Protology over Eschatology?," 319-320.

<sup>1243</sup> The revelation is later continued by the Paraclete (14:26; 16:13-15). See Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 103, 213.

<sup>1244</sup> Referring to 5:17 (my Father is working still and I am working), Neyrey, *The Gospel of John in Cultural and Rhetorical Perspective*, 180, says: "This statement functions as an apology for *not* resting on the Sabbath; and it implies that God also did *not* stop creating on the seventh day but continued working. . . . Jesus is imitating God's continued creative work by his healing on the Sabbath." Weidemann, "The Victory of Protology over Eschatology?," 314, notes the link between ἔργον, and ποιέω, τελειόω in John 4:34; 5:36 and 17:4, and concludes that "the Evangelist presumably had in mind the text of Gen 2:1-3 (and in this perspective the other Old Testament passages, which speak of God's work of creation)." Accordingly, there is a "shift of the protological language-game 'completion/perfection of works' into the description of the working of the *earthly* Jesus."

<sup>1245</sup> See Josef Blank, *Krisis: Untersuchungen zur johanneischen Christologie und Eschatologie* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Lambertus, 1964), 112. Koester, *The Word of Life*, 37, finds the image of God as a *craftsman* in John 5:17ff.

<sup>1246</sup> My teaching is not mine but his who sent me.

permanence in unity. Moreover, because of the GENERIC IS SPECIFIC metaphor the particular unity of Jesus and God can be applied to the unity between Jesus and the believers:

ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ γνώσεσθε ὑμεῖς  
ὅτι ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ μου  
καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐν ἐμοὶ  
καὶ ἐγὼ ἐν ὑμῖν.<sup>1247</sup> (14:20).

The metaphor resembles the Russian Matryoshka dolls which are kept in each other. The union of Jesus and God becomes present in the believers.

We can also see a somewhat reverse order of entities in each other in 17:21:

καθὼς σύ, πάτερ, ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ ἐγὼ ἐν σοί, ἵνα καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐν ἡμῖν ᾧσιν<sup>1248</sup>

The container and contained are switched; this again points to functionality. The believers think, behave and act in harmony with Jesus (12:25-26; 13:12-17; 14:23-24; 15:11).<sup>1249</sup>

This special union between the father, Jesus and the believers is depicted in the image of the vine and the gardener in 15:1-8.

Ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ ἄμπελος ἡ ἀληθινὴ  
καὶ ὁ πατήρ μου ὁ γεωργὸς ἐστίν.<sup>1250</sup> (15:1).

μείνατε ἐν ἐμοί,  
καὶ ἐγὼ ἐν ὑμῖν.

καθὼς τὸ κλῆμα οὐ δύναται καρπὸν φέρειν ἂφ' ἑαυτοῦ

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<sup>1247</sup> On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.—this is also said about the Spirit in 14:17. After Jesus leaves, he sends the Spirit who continues Jesus' work in saving, judging, and revealing (7:38-39; 14:26; 15:26-16:14).

<sup>1248</sup> As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us.

<sup>1249</sup> Commenting on 14:23-24, Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 212, says: Jesus "is not referring either to post-Resurrection appearances or to the Parousia, but to something more vital for the Christian community: his presence and that of the Father with the community of believers through the Spirit. . . . The future eschatology of abiding with Jesus in heaven (14:2) has effectively been transposed into a realized eschatology: Jesus abides with us now."

<sup>1250</sup> "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower."

ἐὰν μὴ μένη ἐν τῇ ἀμπέλῳ,  
οὕτως οὐδὲ ὑμεῖς  
ἐὰν μὴ ἐν ἐμοί μένητε.<sup>1251</sup> (15:4).

The metaphor of the gardener, vine and branches is an agrarian metaphor<sup>1252</sup> that similarly to the water image reveals God's life-giving power as well as the idea that life is linked to God and Jesus; apart from God that is the source of life, there is only death. God as the gardener assures prosperity by providing opportunity for people who link with Jesus.<sup>1253</sup> Mary Magdalene confuses Jesus with the gardener in 20:15. The picture is symbolic: those who abide in Jesus have life. The metaphor also speaks about the unbelievers that will be removed from Jesus, the vine. This suggests that they will not have life, since there is no life apart from Jesus and God.

The unity between Jesus and the believers is also manifested in the friendship with Jesus:

μείζονα ταύτης ἀγάπην οὐδεὶς ἔχει,  
ἵνα τις τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ θῇ ὑπὲρ τῶν φίλων αὐτοῦ.  
ὕμεῖς φίλοι μου ἐστε  
ἐὰν ποιῇτε ἃ ἐγὼ ἐντέλλομαι ὑμῖν.  
οὐκέτι λέγω ὑμᾶς δούλους,  
ὅτι ὁ δοῦλος οὐκ οἶδεν τί ποιεῖ αὐτοῦ ὁ κύριος·  
ὕμᾶς δὲ εἵρηκα φίλους,

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<sup>1251</sup> Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me.

<sup>1252</sup> Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 213: "The grapevine and the vineyard often symbolize the fruitfulness of the land in the Old Testament, so it was a short step for the vine to become a symbol for Israel." Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 214, points out that in Sir 24:17-19 wisdom "likens herself to a vine," and concludes that "because the wisdom tradition exerted a formative influence on John's Christology, the use of the image of the vine in that context provides a key to understanding John's use of this image. It is only a short step from the use of the image of the vine to depict Wisdom to its association with the Messiah. . . . The striking feature of the symbolism of the vine in John 15 is that it ceases to represent Israel and takes on Christological significance. It represents Jesus himself. Whereas one's salvation had depended on identity with Israel, the people of God, Jesus declares that life depends on abiding in him."

<sup>1253</sup> Cf. Koester, *The Word of Life*, 39; Neyrey, *The Gospel of John*, 253-261.

ὅτι πάντα ἃ ἤκουσα παρά τοῦ πατρὸς μου ἐγνώρισα ὑμῖν<sup>1254</sup> (15:13-15).

These verses relate friendship to love, unity in acting and knowledge—these characterize Jesus' intimacy with God as well (5:20).<sup>1255</sup> True friendship is based on virtue according to the ancient idea of friendship,<sup>1256</sup> and this idea is expressed here as well: the disciples do what Jesus commands (see also 15:4-12). Therefore, *abiding* does not involve the thought of “becoming a Christian but of staying a Christian, i.e. living out and acting the Christian life. This implies an inner commitment with reciprocal obligations: the believer abides in Christ and Christ and his words abide in the believer.”<sup>1257</sup>

The Johannine idea of friendship is also close to the OT in stating God as the source of virtue, and thus, as the source of friendship.<sup>1258</sup> The disciples that do what Jesus commands them are true friends of Jesus, and this also means that their communion with Jesus is permanent.<sup>1259</sup> And if the disciples are permanently with Jesus, they will share in everything he did and they will be where he is (14:2-4). Other related qualities also appear: frankness and openness (7:26; 10:24; 18:20; 16:25-30),<sup>1260</sup> and loyalty (6:35, 37).<sup>1261</sup>

We can also observe another the essential element of friendship in the text above: to seek the other's well-being even to the point of dying for him. This is not a Jewish idea of friendship, but

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<sup>1254</sup> No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father.

<sup>1255</sup> See the other references to Jesus' functional unity with God above.

<sup>1256</sup> Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 8.3.6.

<sup>1257</sup> Chrys Caragounis, “‘Abide in Me’: A New Mode of Relationship between Jesus and His Followers as a Basis for Christian Ethics (John 15),” in van der Watt and Zimmermann, *Rethinking the Ethics of John*, 262-263.

<sup>1258</sup> We do not repeat everything that was previously said about the idea of friendship in Jewish and Greek culture; for that, see the discussion on friendship in Wis.

<sup>1259</sup> Following Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:510-512, Jerome H. Neyrey, “Spaced out: ‘Territoriality’ in the Fourth Gospel,” *HvTSt* 58 (2002): 651-652, describes two connotations of the expression μένειν, “permanence” and “immanence/relationship”—the latter is associated with “being in” (see John 14:10, 11); in the references to Jesus and the Father “being in” describes Jesus' role as “the bridge between the heavenly and earthly worlds” (652). Brown relies on two important studies: G. Percorara, “De verbo ‘manere’ apud Joannem,” *DivThom* 40 (1937): 159-171, and Rudolf Schnackenburg, “Zu den joh. Immanenzformeln,” in *Die Johannesbriefe* (2nd ed.; Freiburg: Herder, 1963), 105-109.

<sup>1260</sup> Konstan, “Friendship, Frankness and Flattery,” 15: “One particular modulation of the ideal of frankness or παρρησία is the Christian ideal of perfect openness before God.” Cf. Klassen, “Παρρησία,” 240-254.

<sup>1261</sup> See van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 366.

it was very common among the Greeks. Friendship with Jesus means thinking and acting in unity with him. However, this is one of the unequal friendships since the disciples have to do what Jesus commands; in turn, Jesus lays down his life for them (3:14-16), an act of extreme sharing. The disciples' actions are, nevertheless, not "blind" actions, since friendship in Jesus also means sharing in his knowledge;<sup>1262</sup> Jesus as light revealed everything to his believers, and based on this knowledge they can act in unity with him and the Father.

The communion with Jesus is also expressed via a marital metaphor in 3:29. Jesus is called *the bridegroom*. The metaphor does not only emphasize the unity between the believers and Jesus, but it includes the notions of love, mutuality and commitment, and it implies that Jesus is the giver of life.<sup>1263</sup> The *brides* of Jesus will live lifelong that is a life without end in communion with Jesus.

To conclude, the close unity between Jesus and God is also extended to the believers that take part in the family of God (17:20-23). The believers receive new life through being born of God. This new life means unity with God and Jesus in the divine family.<sup>1264</sup> "You in me, and I in you" is the way the new life is perceived. The metaphor also explains why only those who believe can receive life. Since God is present in Jesus and Jesus is present in God (10:38; 14:10-11; 17:11, 21-26), only those who accept Jesus to be in them can enter this communion and be saved.

### 3.2.4 Abide in the Love Relation of Father and Son

In the following I shall describe a metaphor where LIFE IS BEING PRESENT HERE is combined with a metaphor that structures love. It has been described how the former functions; now I shall describe its combination with another metaphor where an abstract concept, love, is perceived as a container.

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<sup>1262</sup> Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 398: "It is characteristic of John that that which (according to him) distinguishes the friend from the slave is knowledge, and that knowledge should be very closely related to love. The existence of a superior group of φίλοι, distinguished from δοῦλοι, recalls both Gnosticism and the mystery cults . . . ; but it must always be remembered that for John the distinguishing marks of those who become φίλοι are the obedience and humility shown by Jesus himself."

<sup>1263</sup> Cf. Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:579-581.

<sup>1264</sup> After Jesus' death and resurrection, the Spirit Paraclete sent by Jesus will abide in the believers and will keep the believers abide in Christ and the Father (14:16-20).

The unity in the family of God is also manifested by mutual love. John 17:22-23 links the metaphor of abiding in Jesus with *abiding in love*:

. . .

ἵνα ὧσιν

ἐν καθὼς ἡμεῖς ἐν·

ἐγὼ ἐν αὐτοῖς

καὶ σὺ ἐν ἐμοί,

ἵνα ὧσιν τετελειωμένοι εἰς ἐν,<sup>1265</sup>

ἵνα γινώσκη ὁ κόσμος

ὅτι σὺ με ἀπέστειλας

καὶ ἠγάπησας αὐτοὺς

καθὼς ἐμὲ ἠγάπησας.<sup>1266</sup>

The love the text speaks of is an eternal love between the Father and the Son (3:35; 5:20; 10:17; 14:31; 15:9-10; 17:23-24).<sup>1267</sup> The Father loves the Son *πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου*<sup>1268</sup> (17:24), and the Son loves the Father (14:31: ἀλλ' ἵνα γινῶ ὁ κόσμος ὅτι ἀγαπῶ τὸν πατέρα, καὶ καθὼς ἐνετείλατό μοι ὁ πατήρ, οὕτως ποιῶ<sup>1269</sup>). This mutual, eternal love is poured out to the creation to encompass the whole humankind:<sup>1270</sup>

οὕτως γὰρ ἠγάπησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν κόσμον,

ὥστε τὸν υἱὸν τὸν μονογενῆ ἔδωκεν,

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<sup>1265</sup> Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 182, referring to John 10:30, says: "The Greek numeral here is neuter, not masculine; Jesus and the Father are one entity, not one person." But the expression also points to the relation between Jesus and the Father (see above) that extends to all believers.

<sup>1266</sup> So that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

<sup>1267</sup> Newman and Nida, *A Translator's Handbook*, 104, mentions that most scholars see no difference between ἀγαπάω and φιλέω in John. See also Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:324-325. Newman and Nida, *A Translator's Handbook*, 104, also points out that "the primary focus in the biblical concept of love is always that of giving rather than of receiving."

<sup>1268</sup> Before the foundation of the world.

<sup>1269</sup> But I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father.

<sup>1270</sup> See also Bennema, *The Power of Saving Wisdom*, 114, 117, who emphasizes the soteriological aspect of the love between the Father and Son.

ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν μὴ ἀπόληται ἀλλ' ἔχῃ ζωὴν αἰώνιον.<sup>1271</sup> (3:16).

We can see the picture of the all-powerful Creator here, who loves and saves (3:16-17).<sup>1272</sup> His love<sup>1273</sup> towards the creation is so strong that He gives “his only Son”<sup>1274</sup> to save the believers.<sup>1275</sup> “Here alone in the Fourth Gospel the love of God for the rebellious *world* is stated to be the reason for the incarnation and death of Christ . . . it is the fundamental summary of the message of this Gospel and should therefore be seen as the background of the canvas on which the rest of the Gospel is painted.”<sup>1276</sup> The coming of the Son into the world makes the love of the Creator God visible. Jesus’ acceptance of the suffering and cross is the fulfilment of God’s love (10:11f). That is how love reaches the world in the person of the Son; he does not only make God’s love present, but transmits this love to the believers:

καὶ ἐγνώρισα αὐτοῖς τὸ ὄνομά σου

καὶ γνώρισω,

ἵνα ἡ ἀγάπη ἣν ἠγάπησάς με ἐν αὐτοῖς ἧ

κἀγὼ ἐν αὐτοῖς<sup>1277</sup> (17:26).

All those who believe will take part in this love-relationship of the Father and Son. This relationship also implies the extension of this love to the other believers (15:12).<sup>1278</sup> This

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<sup>1271</sup> For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

<sup>1272</sup> The parallel in 3:16a/17a-16bc/17bc emphasizes God’s will to save the whole cosmos. However, only ὁ πιστεύων (3:16b) can have eternal life because salvation is found in Jesus alone.

<sup>1273</sup> Newman and Nida, *A Translator’s Handbook*, 89: “In Greek, the tense of the verb loved points to a specific action in the past; that is, to God’s giving of his Son.”

<sup>1274</sup> Beasley-Murray, *John*, 51: τὸν υἱὸν τὸν μονογενῆ ἔδωκεν “embraces both incarnation and vicarious death.”

<sup>1275</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:568: “This special love from Father and Son was an early Christian conception (e.g., Rom 8:37; Gal 2:20; Eph 2:4; 5:2, 25; 2 Thess 2:16) undoubtedly treasured in John’s circle of believers (1 John 3:16; 4:10, 19; Rev 1:5; 3:9).” Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:567-569, notes that the idea of the loving God also appears in the Hellenistic religion of that period, whereas the idea occurs with frequency in Jewish tradition. However, he notes that in Jewish thought God’s love is shown mostly towards the righteous or Israel, while John emphasizes the idea that God loves the whole world. We shall note that the idea that God loves all that he created appears in Wis 11:24-26 as well.

<sup>1276</sup> Beasley-Murray, *John*, 51. Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 153: “The event which is brought to fulfilment in the exaltation of the Son of Man is grounded in the love of God which sent him, so that faith might receive eternal life.” Bultmann also adds: “The real miracle, therefore, is the mission of the Son, which men believe when they believe in the exaltation of the Son of Man” (*The Gospel of John*, 153).

<sup>1277</sup> I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.

manifestation of love can be paralleled to the way the dynamics of life is pictured in 6:57 (see 14:21, 23; 16:27). Jesus' declaration in 5:42, τὴν ἀγάπην τοῦ θεοῦ οὐκ ἔχετε ἐν ἑαυτοῖς,<sup>1279</sup> defines the relationship with God in terms of love. This love relationship is also functional,<sup>1280</sup> related to the mission of Jesus and that of the disciples.<sup>1281</sup>

We have seen different texts related to love; one last interesting one is 15:9-10 where the metaphor LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE is combined with LOVE IS A CONTAINER:

Καθὼς ἠγάπησέν με ὁ πατήρ,  
καὶ γὰρ ὑμεῖς ἠγάπησα·  
μεῖναι ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ τῇ ἐμῇ.  
ἐὰν τὰς ἐντολάς μου τηρήσητε,  
μενεῖτε ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ μου,  
καθὼς ἐγὼ τὰς ἐντολάς τοῦ πατρὸς μου τετήρηκα  
καὶ μένω αὐτοῦ ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ.<sup>1282</sup>

The abstract concept love is viewed here as a container that one enters if he believes in Jesus. The metaphor of love is combined with LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE; thus, eternal life is viewed as abiding in the love of Jesus and God. If we remember that earthly life was structured as a journey during which one departs towards a destination, we can also understand love and abiding in Jesus as locations towards one departs; the traveller reaches these locations during earthly life, and he

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<sup>1278</sup> Anderson, *Riddles*, 17: "A striking feature of Jesus' love command in the Johannine tradition is that it emphasizes loving one another as an expression of one's love for Jesus." See 13:1-11, 34-35; 15:9-10, 17. For the relation between love, laying down one's life, and washing of the feet, see Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 203-209.

<sup>1279</sup> You do not have the love of God in you.

<sup>1280</sup> See Borchert, *John*, 146.

<sup>1281</sup> Van der Watt and Kok, "Violence in a Gospel of Love," 179, say that love is "the main ethical demand in the Gospel." They explain it in the following way: "In the same way that the Father loved the world, his children should also love the world (John 3:16). The love towards people outside the Johannine community is rooted in the mission of Jesus, and, therefore, also in the missionary agenda of his followers" ("Violence in a Gospel of Love," 179).

<sup>1282</sup> As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.



remains there after death. Therefore these two images reinforce the idea of life as an eternal state in the realm of God.

### 3.2.5 Being in the Hand of God

Eternal life also means being in the hand of God. 10:28-29 relates these two concepts very clearly, drawing a parallel between giving life and being in the hand of the Father:

καὶ γὰρ δίδωμι αὐτοῖς ζωὴν αἰώνιον  
καὶ οὐ μὴ ἀπόλωνται εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα  
καὶ οὐχ ἄρπάσει τις αὐτὰ ἐκ τῆς χειρὸς μου.  
ὁ πατήρ μου ὃ δέδωκέν μοι πάντων μεῖζόν ἐστιν,  
καὶ οὐδεὶς δύναται ἄρπάζειν ἐκ τῆς χειρὸς τοῦ πατρὸς.<sup>1283</sup>

The metaphor *being in the hand of God* is a complex metaphor. Once again LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE is combined with the Great Chain Metaphor; therefore life is perceived as presence in the hand of God. In LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE life is perceived as a container in which human beings are.<sup>1284</sup> The hand of God metaphor strengthens this perception of life. Life is presence here, but *here* is elaborated by the hand of God metaphor. So going further with the analysis, we return again to what hand of God means and how it works. Similarly to the structure of *born of God*, in the hand of God metaphor we can see instances of both source and target domain; the hand is the source domain (part of human body) and God is the target domain (power of God). Via the Great Chain Metaphor we can see that God's power is perceived in terms of human body.<sup>1285</sup>

According to the scheme discussed at Wis, the hand of God refers to God's power to give life and protect, to judge and punish. In the expression that the believers are in the hand of God LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE is combined with the hand of God. As a result, οὐχ ἄρπάσει τις αὐτὰ ἐκ τῆς

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<sup>1283</sup> I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. What my Father has given me is greater than all else, and no one can snatch it out of the Father's hand.

<sup>1284</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 98.

<sup>1285</sup> See the explanation in Wis; cf. Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 128-130.

χειρὸς μου means that the believers are present in a state (the hand of God) where they share all the properties of that state. Thus, they are protected and receive life. We have said that the unity in the family of God is functional unity. 3:35 and 13:3 say that God “had given all things into his [Jesus’] hands”; this refers to Jesus’ investment with power to protect (17:12), save (5:21; 17:2), rule (14:30; 16:33; 17:2), judge and punish (5:22, 27; 9:39). From this it follows that the believer, who is in functional unity with God and Jesus, is also given authority to act like God and Jesus. Thus, besides being protected and saved, being in the hand of God should also mean that they receive power to judge.

10:28-29 emphasizes the connection between the members of the family, between the Son and the Father (5:17ff; 8:16, 28-29; 10:30; 16:32; 17:11), and between Jesus and the disciples. No one *will snatch* the believers out of Jesus’ hand because once they are part of the family of God, the Father, the most powerful protects them (10:28-29).<sup>1286</sup> So the children of God enjoy the protection of the Father during their life. This protection, however, does not only cover the believers’ earthly life, but it continues after death because the unity in the family of God extends beyond earthly life (13:36; 14:2-4, 23).<sup>1287</sup> Those who believe will move into eternity through the communion with Jesus; therefore, physical death does not affect them. Thus, *life* again means that the believers will not perish.<sup>1288</sup> This is, of course, very explicit in 10:28ab already, but the use of metaphor being in the hand of God underlines the surety of salvation. Having received life, the believer “has passed from death to life” (5:24), and there is no way that this process is reversed because “no one can snatch it out of the Father’s hand.”

We have discussed life; now let us see whether the other properties of *hand of God* are also true of the believer. Jesus gives authority to the disciples to judge (20:23). This seems, however, less

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<sup>1286</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 240-241, notes that 10:24-30 brings together the concept of family, farming and life. This intertwining underlines that those who have life are protected by the Father (10:28-29). Further, the relational aspect of life again comes to the fore since being protected is the result of having life from a Father who protects. Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 386: “The world has no longer any power over the believer, for his security lies beyond the world.”

<sup>1287</sup> See the discussion on *ALIVE IS UP*.

<sup>1288</sup> As we discussed above with reference to John 5:24; 11:25-26: the believer has already “passed from death to life”; therefore physical death will not end his life.

important than the other aspects of *being in the hand of God* since we find only one reference to the disciples' judging function; therefore, we do not discuss it in a separate section. The disciples are commissioned with power; but contrary to Wis, their judgment refers to the judgment on earth and not an eschatological judgment. Further, it is rather a commission in which the "believers can play a role in other believers' forgiveness, at least by prayer (1 John 5:16-17)."<sup>1289</sup> But this judgment also has the characteristics of an eschatological judgment in that it distinguishes between good and evil, and it exhibits power. But we have to remember that judgment is important for us inasmuch as it is related to the concept of life. John 5:24 says that the believers do not come under judgment; but they have "passed from death to life." This relates judgment and death. Accordingly, those who do not come under judgment will not die, but have life; life prevents the believers from judgment and, therefore, from death, too.<sup>1290</sup> Although the kingship of the believers in John is not emphasized to the extent Wis emphasizes it, two notices has to be made. The eternal God who has power over all vests his children with authority (1:12; 20:23).<sup>1291</sup> Moreover, we have mentioned above that the believer is born as the child of a father who is king (1:12-13; 3:3-5).<sup>1292</sup> So here, too, life in the family of God and kingship are related. The metaphor of being in the hand of God emphasizes the idea that life in the realm of God means protection from death and power to live the life of God.

### 3.2.6 Life in Terms of Light

Up to now we have analysed metaphors that grab the relational aspect of life. The metaphors described in the followings, although seem to present a different structuring of life, also perceive life in terms of relation with Jesus.

We have seen light structuring earthly life. Then we have described Jesus as the true life (11:25; 14:6; etc.) and the light of the world that enlightens all people (1:4-9; 3:19; 8:12; 9:5). We have

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<sup>1289</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 2:1207. See also Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2:1044; Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 693 n. 3, says that the authority of the disciples "is especially linked with the giving of the Spirit."

<sup>1290</sup> See the chapter on judgment and death.

<sup>1291</sup> See van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 185.

<sup>1292</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 174.

said that the idea of Jesus as light refers to the revelation of God and his life (1:5-9; 3:19; 8:12; 9:5; cf. 1:18; 17:25). But we would like to discuss a bit further the relation between life and light.

ἐγώ εἰμι τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου·

ὁ ἀκολουθῶν ἐμοὶ οὐ μὴ περιπατήσει ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ,

ἀλλ' ἔξει τὸ φῶς τῆς ζωῆς<sup>1293</sup> (8:12bcd).

The genitive phrase τὸ φῶς τῆς ζωῆς (8:12)<sup>1294</sup> can be interpreted as referring to “the light that produces life”;<sup>1295</sup> this is also true since the revelation of Jesus has performative effects that is the acceptance of the revelation results in life. The other interpretation is to see the light as the ethical aspect of life. The meaning is not that light produces life, but life illuminates. The metaphorical structuring is thus the following: LIFE IS LIGHT. Light is source and life is target concept. Light then has to be understood non-metaphorically since it is a source concept. When we understand light in its own terms, the characteristics of light that are mapped into the target domain life are the following: light lets us see and understand. Thus, here LIFE IS LIGHT will have an ethical connotation. Jesus as light (1:4) reveals the life of God, and gives knowledge to the people; he shows how one should behave and act in the family of God.<sup>1296</sup> Because Jesus has life, he can reveal the life of God.<sup>1297</sup> People who receive life also share in this aspect of life: they have knowledge, so they live according to the life received.<sup>1298</sup> This latter connotation of

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<sup>1293</sup> "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life."

<sup>1294</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:739: the image of Jesus as the light in 8:12 echoes 1:4, and “probably recalls the servant’s mission” in Isa 42:6; 49:6; it may also recall Isa 9:1-2, or the eschatological light from Zech 14:7.

<sup>1295</sup> Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, 338.

<sup>1296</sup> See Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:246, for the knowledge of the believers; also Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 131-132, 278, who links light to wisdom and knowledge. Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:26-27, argues that the background image of 1:4 is the creation narrative of Gen: “That which had especially come to be in God’s creative Word was the gift of eternal life. This life was the light of men because the tree of life was closely associated with the tree of the knowledge of good and evil” (27).

<sup>1297</sup> Cf. John 1:48: “I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you.” Beasley-Murray, *John*, 27: “Jesus has insight beyond that of the prophets, he is the Revealer to whom and through whom God communicates . . . It is possible that we have here a reflection of the Wisdom tradition wherein the ‘Son of God’ is marked as having wisdom from God; the Son has received from God his Father knowledge and revelation, of which Solomon, the Son of David, the supremely wise man, was the model; he who knows the hearts possesses wisdom. Solomon had this gift (Wis 7:20), and it is manifested in yet greater measure in Jesus.”

<sup>1298</sup> This latter interpretation is more probable in the light of 1:4 and the context of 8; see van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 238-239, who also notes (239 n. 418) that 8:21, 24 shows that you can only see light if you have life;

light can be paralleled to the knowledge received through being born of God (3:7ff). Once people are born of God, they receive true knowledge through which they understand the new life they have. They are called *the children of light* in 12:36, which means that they know how to live, behave and act in the divine sphere.<sup>1299</sup>

Interestingly, the first reading of τὸ φῶς τῆς ζωῆς can also be interpreted via the metaphor LIFE IS LIGHT. We have said in the first reading light is seen as promoting life. But if we understand this text via the metaphor LIFE IS LIGHT, we should keep in mind that the target concept of light is life, so the characteristics of light are mapped into the target domain life. We mentioned some of the properties of light mapped into life above; here we take into account another property, that light promotes growth. Accordingly, the meaning of τὸ φῶς τῆς ζωῆς would be that life (that Jesus reveals) promotes growth, i.e. life gives life. Thus, we can see again the conception that the general phenomenon of life leads to individual life.

### 3.2.7 Life in Terms of Knowledge

Although we have already related knowledge to life above when we said that life as light allows us to gain knowledge, we focused on the ethical connotation of knowledge (1:4; 8:12; 15:13-14, 22-24). But there is another aspect of knowledge, the knowledge of God and Jesus. Actually this is the root or basis of knowledge of ethical behavior.

αὕτη δέ ἐστιν ἡ αἰώνιος ζωὴ

ἵνα γινώσκωσιν σὲ τὸν μόνον ἀληθινὸν θεὸν

καὶ ὃν ἀπέστειλας Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν.<sup>1300</sup> (17:3).

Eternal life is defined as a quality again, in terms of knowledge of God.<sup>1301</sup> Knowledge of God does not derive from reasoning. Nicodemus' question in 3:4 depicts the thinking of mortal

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8:39-41 speaks about the ethical behaviour of the children, who behave like the father. For a more detailed explanation of the imagery of light, see van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 245-260.

<sup>1299</sup> See van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 236-237; cf. Koester, *The Word of Life*, 104.

<sup>1300</sup> And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

man<sup>1302</sup> who has not reached true knowledge yet and whose perception is determined by his corporeality. His failure to understand Jesus shows the limitations of human beings who need to acquire another (spiritual) existence (3:3, 5) through Jesus in order to have knowledge of and accept another than earthly reality.<sup>1303</sup> “Thus the theory of knowledge is established in the Gospel. Proper revelatory knowledge requires spiritual sensitivity. Then only is true faith, as desired by Jesus, possible (2:23-25). Then only can the ‘heavenly things’ be appreciated and understood (3:12-13). The spiritual rebirth opens the eyes for the kingdom of God (3:3).”<sup>1304</sup> The one who is born of God can see the Kingdom of God.<sup>1305</sup> And via KNOWING IS SEEING we understand that *seeing* refers to the knowledge of God.<sup>1306</sup> The content of true faith is also answered now. Faith (1:12) is based on the relation with God; moreover, true faith implies knowledge of God. Faith starts from God who loves the world<sup>1307</sup> and sends his only Son to give life to the world (3:16-17).<sup>1308</sup> The first step on behalf of man is to open up and accept Jesus who was sent by God (9:36). This acceptance results in the believers’ communion with Jesus and God

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<sup>1301</sup> Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 419-420: knowledge and life are linked in Hebrew and Hellenistic thought. Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:234: John uses Greek terminology, but the concept of knowledge remains Jewish. For a detailed discussion of the knowledge in John, see Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:234-247. Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 494-495: viewed in context with 17:6, we understand that both God and Jesus are “the object” of γινώσκωσιν “because the Father is only known as the one who has sent the Son, and because there can be no knowledge of the one without the other.”

<sup>1302</sup> Koester, *The Word of Life*, 54: Nicodemus is not only an individual, but he represents a whole group of Jews, and at the end, he also represents humanity.

<sup>1303</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 170-171. Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:246: “Because of the polemical context of the Fourth Gospel, however, the most essential prerequisite for true knowledge is believing the claims of Jesus.” Anderson, *Christology*, 210: “The saving function of the christocentric revelation of the Father through the Son in John is not a matter of bringing ‘new’ knowledge to humanity. It involves the process of opening the eyes of the world to the reality of God’s saving presence at all times and the invitation to see with new eyes.”

<sup>1304</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 171. Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 495, understands knowledge as acknowledging: “in it man finds his way back to his Creator, and thus has life.” Taken in the sense Bultmann understands, the concept of knowledge comes close to the salvific knowledge that comes through wisdom and transforms one into the child of God. Bennema, *The Power of Saving Wisdom*, 177, parallels John 3:12 with Wis 9:16 (earthly and heavenly things), and notes that the concept of spiritual rebirth can be found in Philo (see also 178-179).

<sup>1305</sup> Anderson, *Christology*, 206: belief in Jesus is only possible with “divine assistance.” See also Koester, *The Word of Life*, 60-61.

<sup>1306</sup> See also 3:36; 8:51; chap. 9 (esp. 9:38-41); 14:7-10.

<sup>1307</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:246: “For John, as in the OT and Judaism, God’s historical self-revelation is the basis for knowing him.”

<sup>1308</sup> See Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 156. It is Jesus who seeks people; see 1:9-13, 36-38, 43; 3:16-17; 5:14; 9:35. For different types of faith, see Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 97-100.

(15:1-7).<sup>1309</sup> The believer will relate to Jesus and receives a new life (3:3, 5);<sup>1310</sup> he will have true faith in possession of the knowledge of all the things that are in the family of God. Thus, salvific faith is not only intellectual acceptance but also involves existential change: becoming and acting as the child of God (12:25-26; 13:4-17; 14:12, 15, 21, 23; 15:1-19; 17:18; 20:21-23).<sup>1311</sup> Faith is therefore defined in terms of the relation between God and the people.

To sum up, knowledge is a relational term in the Gospel. Only those who are in communion with Jesus and God can get to know God (8:19). Those who accept Jesus' testimony and believe become children of God (John 1:12ab; 3:3, 5; 13:33; 21:5); they abide in the family of God (14:20; 17:21). In this way, they know God. Knowledge of God is one aspect of the life with God.<sup>1312</sup> "Being alive enables such a person to know and relate to God, while getting to know God and Jesus means life (1:4, 18; 5:39-40; 11:25)."<sup>1313</sup> This knowledge will also come to fulfillment at resurrection, when the believer goes where Jesus has prepared the place for him (14:2).

### 3.2.8 Life Related to Peace

Although it is not perceived via a container metaphor as in Wis, peace is metaphorical in John as well:

Εἰρήνην ἀφήμι ὑμῖν,  
εἰρήνην τὴν ἐμὴν δίδωμι ὑμῖν.<sup>1314</sup> (14:27ab).

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<sup>1309</sup> Newman and Nida, *A Translator's Handbook*, 88: the meaning of belief also involves trust, loyalty and relying on Jesus.

<sup>1310</sup> Van der Watt, "Salvation in the Gospel according to John," 125: faith and birth go together but they are not the same; faith "describes a person's attitude and reaction," while birth "describes the moment of change, or salvation."

<sup>1311</sup> Van der Watt, "Salvation in the Gospel according to John," 121.

<sup>1312</sup> Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2:741: the present subjunctive (γινώσκωσιν) in 17:3 suggests a continuing relation.

<sup>1313</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 216.

<sup>1314</sup> Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.

Peace is conceived as an entity (peace I *give* you, *my* peace).<sup>1315</sup> It is something that belongs to Jesus. As a consequence, the peace given to the disciples is not earthly peace but a peace connected to Jesus' presence and, therefore, to life.<sup>1316</sup> Wherever Jesus is present, life and peace are present.

The giving of peace comes after a crisis situation every time (16:20-33; 20:19, 21, 26).<sup>1317</sup> This expresses liminality; it is a threshold when the crisis is reversed. It is linked to joy (17:13);<sup>1318</sup> the disciples step into the sphere of Jesus where their fear is turned into joy and peace. Jesus' actions of giving peace then express the reversal of the crisis. 16:21 expresses this idea more explicitly: "When a woman is in labor, she has pain, because her hour has come. But when her child is born, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy of having brought a human being into the world." As birth from God leads to a new existence, Jesus act of giving peace also leads to an existence of joy, and this is the quality of eternal life. Life then can be understood via the metaphor LIFE IS PEACE.

### 3.3 Conclusion: Life as Quality and Quantity

We intend to summarize what has been said about life up to now. The concept of life in John is a complex notion. Although the verbal expressions present *life* in most of the cases simply as an entity that is given by Jesus to the believers, the metaphors that structure the concept of life display its complexity. Thus, in order to succeed in grasping the fullness of meaning or at least come close to it, we had to analyse not only the verbal expressions, but the different metaphors as well that point to the various aspects of the concept of life. The images and metaphors that structure life display the diversity of the concept. Some of the metaphors that were analysed do

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<sup>1315</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 2:982: "'Peace' applies particularly to war or human relationships, but also (for Stoic thinkers especially) to tranquility in the midst of hardship or to the bliss of the righteous after death; it is also an eschatological hope for Israel."

<sup>1316</sup> Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 213: Peace "is not the absence of conflict but inner peace in the face of conflict because the Spirit dwells in them."

<sup>1317</sup> See Neyrey, *The Gospel of John*, 252.

<sup>1318</sup> See Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 213.



not seem to deal with eternal life at first glance; however, if we look at them closely, we find that they all add some nuance to the concept of life and help us understand life in its totality.

We started by showing that eternal life is linked to the realm of God; it is the quality of the divine. The timeframe of the creation, including the earthly life of human beings, is limited. The metaphors that structure earthly life emphasize the aspect of movement. Earthly life is pictured as a possession that can be lost, as time that moves, as a location that changes, as a journey that ends with death. The eternity of God, on the contrary, implies a permanent, continuous state. The only way human beings can trespass their finiteness is if they receive the gift of God, eternal life that makes them be able to live on through death. Thus, there is dialectic between the eternity of God and the eternity of man. The first concept of eternity is eternity in the absolute sense. The latter has a beginning and it is not naturally imbedded in man, but it is a gift of the Creator God. However, if man receives this gift, he is able to ascend to the realm of God and this means that he will not die, but live forever. What does then eternal life imply? What can be the quality that makes people able to ascend to the realm of God? There is only one thing that can enable human beings relate to the divine, and this is the quality of the life of God. What God gives to man through Jesus is the quality of his own life (6:57). This is eternal life, to partake in God's life.

Partaking in God's life does not only mean sharing eternal life, but implies relation. The metaphor LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE, combined with the Great Chain Metaphor, perceives eternal life as presence in the family of God. Several other metaphors are linked to LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE. The family of God metaphor presents life as presence in the family of God. The believer becomes the child of God and lives the life of the Father. The relational aspect of life is also grasped via the metaphors that combine LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE with the Great Chain Metaphor and container metaphors. As a result, life is perceived as presence in the hand of Jesus and God, but also as presence in Jesus and God and in their love. There is also an ethical aspect of life. The believers are not only part of this life, but they receive knowledge of God, knowledge of how to

act as the children of God.<sup>1319</sup> This aspect is conceived via the metaphors that structure life in terms of light and knowledge. We can also see life linked to peace. The peace given by Jesus is the quality of the life acquired through him, a new existence with joy and without fear. And finally, a very different metaphor based on the generic metaphor EVENTS ARE ACTIONS structures life. This leads to a perception of life where individual life is viewed as the result of the general phenomenon of life. The basic simplicity of these various metaphors is that they all share a common aspect: the relational feature of life.

By analysing these metaphors we get a nuanced picture of life. This picture shows various aspects of life; the relation with Jesus and God, love, peace, existence above, existence as the child of God, being in the hand of God, knowledge, acting the way Jesus and God does are all the properties of this life. The person who receives life will have a share in all these properties. Thus, life also enables us to live in the spiritual reality of God and partake in his life. Those who own this quality can be in communion with God; therefore they don't die, but their life continuously goes on through death. Eternal life, thus, has a quantitative dimension, too.

Since the believers receive eternal life in their earthly life, eternal life already starts in the present. The believer still lives on earth, but he is spiritually separated from the world and belongs to the realm of up where life is. Therefore he will not be judged, but he will live forever because he has already "passed from death to life" (5:24). This is a major difference between the concept of eternity in John and that of the OT, early Jewish literature and the Synoptic Gospels—in these latter eternal life is a future hope, since it is a life in the Kingdom of God to come. Nevertheless, it presents similarity with Wis. In the Fourth Gospel eternal life is already given in the present (5:24). Life will come to full realization at the resurrection.<sup>1320</sup> Thus,

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<sup>1319</sup> Jacobus Kok, "As the Father Has Sent Me, I Send You: Towards a Missional-Incarnational Ethos in John 4," in van der Watt, Zimmermann and Luther, *Moral Language in the New Testament*, 171: "In John, soteriology also implies re-socialization and entrance into a new social reality, which also serves as the basis for the formulation of the believers' ethics. Therefore, a fundamental dialectic relationship exists between ethics and ethos. Conduct is a result of identity and therefore ethos is always a result of ethics."

<sup>1320</sup> Although Jesus expresses the present realization of resurrection as well in 11:25, similarly to life and judgment; see Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 187-188.

realized eschatology and future eschatology are combined;<sup>1321</sup> it is a “progressively realizing eschatology” what we see in John.<sup>1322</sup>

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<sup>1321</sup> Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 261-262, solves this “double” eschatology by ascribing the future eschatology to the ecclesiastical redaction.

<sup>1322</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 436.

## 4 Thematic and Conceptual Parallels in Wis and John

Having argued for John's use of wisdom framework in the Introduction, time has now come to summarize the textual arguments I based my hypothesis on. It is not surprising, given the fact that John draws on wisdom tradition,<sup>1323</sup> that Wis and John display similarities in thought, worldview and concept. What is striking, though, is the number and width of similarities. One would not realize this until reading these texts thoroughly. The way they perceive and structure the concepts of immortality and eternal life shows much correspondence.<sup>1324</sup> They relate same ideas to the concept of immortality and eternal life; the metaphors they use to understand and express these concepts are many times alike. Moreover, they use these metaphors in similar context and with the same implications. Their worldview shows great resemblance; the way they look at God, the world, human life and life with God is analogous. They share the same cosmological principle that God created life, and so human beings are destined for eternity. They share the belief that there is no life without God, and true existence is only in unity with God. They share the conviction that one's attitude towards God influences his present and future. They regard the world as the context where man has to decide whether he trusts God or else relates to evil; as a result of his decision, man will enter one of the spiritual worlds and continues being present there after his physical death. And finally, both Wis and John believe that the unity with God is found in the relation with the ones sent by God to mediate life; wisdom and Jesus have to be accepted in order to enter in communion with God and receive life and immortality.

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<sup>1323</sup> See among others Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, liii-lvi; Harris, *The Origin of the Prologue*; Hunt, *Primitive Gospel Sources*, 311-317; Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 396-417, 37-60; Moeller, "Wisdom Motifs," 92-100; Clark, "Signs in Wisdom and John," 201-209; Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, esp. 330-387; Witherington, *John's Wisdom*; Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*; Ringe, *Wisdom's Friends*; Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:CXXII-CXXVII; Brown, *Introduction*, 259-265; Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:121-124; Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*; John Painter, *The Quest for the Messiah: The History, Literature, and Theology of the Johannine Community*, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993); Cory, "Wisdom's Rescue," 95-116; von Wahlde, "He Has Given to the Son to Have Life in Himself," 409-412; Coloe, *Dwelling in the Household of God*, 72-103.

<sup>1324</sup> Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 378: John has a unique view on salvation, different from the Synoptics and similar to that in Wis.

In proceeding with the comparison I follow the structure I used in my analysis on Wis and John. This makes the comparison more clear and transparent.<sup>1325</sup> The discussion does not only involve the similarities, but it also extends to the differences that are important regarding immortality and eternal life.<sup>1326</sup> The differences show the unique thinking of the implied authors that is probably affected inter alia by the circumstances from which the books arise. I do not, however, wish to enter into discussion regarding the background of Wis and John, the influences attributable to their historical-cultural milieu, I simply want to evince the similarities and differences in worldview, thought, concepts and cognition of Wis and John.

## 4.1 Cosmology

The cosmology is the context of immortality and eternal life in Wis and John. Their view on cosmology determines how they think of immortality and eternal life. This affirmation implies three major points of importance.

Firstly, the creation is regarded as carrying the possibility and reality of immortality and eternal life. God destined man for immortality and eternal life (Wis 1:14; 2:23; John 1:3-4);<sup>1327</sup> this is the reality of God. But man has to accept it, has to believe in it in order to have it realized in his life (Wis 1:1, 15; 6:21; 7:7ff; John 1:12-13; 3:14-16).<sup>1328</sup> The description of man's fate shows that immortality and eternal life does not belong to man inherently,<sup>1329</sup> but it is the quality of God; so the condition to receive it is to relate to God (Wis 1:1, 15; 3:15; 7:24, 27; John 3:14-16; 3:35-36) and receive immortality as a gift (Wis 8:13, 17; 16:20-26; 19:21; John 1:3; 4:10; 6:27-58).

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<sup>1325</sup> To facilitate the flow of discussion, I put the references, even the references to verses in case there is more, in the footnote.

<sup>1326</sup> I am not going to motivate all the remarks in each case to avoid repetition; I referred to sources before at the discussion on Wis and John.

<sup>1327</sup> See Collins, "The Mysteries of God," 294; Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 66; Amir, "The Figure of Death," 160-161, for creation and immortality in Wis; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:7, and Beasley-Murray, *John*, 11, for creation and eternal life in John.

<sup>1328</sup> Note that we do not list all the possible references to a certain subject, esp. when the references are too many; we only indicate that the concept is used.

<sup>1329</sup> See Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 66; see also 64-65; Collins, "The Mysteries of God," 294, for immortality in Wis; see Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 39-40, for the life of human beings in John.

The second and third point lies in the dynamics of the realms of the cosmos. The cosmologies Wis and John present us differ in their structure. Wis' cosmos is three-levelled and we see three separate realms, the Kingdom of God (9:4, 10; 10:10; 18:15, 24), the earth (1:14; 8:1; 9:1-2, 9; 13:1-5) and Hades (Wis 1:16; 2:24; 16:13), among which there is a dynamics.<sup>1330</sup> John also depicts three realms: the realm of God, that of the evil and the earth. Here, too, there is interaction between the realms of the cosmos.<sup>1331</sup> This cosmos is, however, two-levelled because the realm of the devil totally overlaps the earth. Thus, immediately we can see the differences and the similarities beyond the differences: God's realm overlaps the earth in both texts, and so does evil. This dynamics is the second important aspect of cosmology concerning our topic: how does man's purposed immortality come into realization in this dynamics? The answer lies in the perception that God's realm overlaps the earth. Via wisdom and Jesus God's divine world opens up and the union with wisdom and Jesus takes the righteous/believer up to God's realm (Wis 2:13; 4:10, 11, 14; 5:5, 15-16; John 3:3, 5; 14:2-4) where he shares the qualities of this realm that is eternal life (Wis 3:1-9; 5:15; John 5:24-26; 6:57). So, human life involves another, spiritual existence that is already experienced by man during his earthly life (Wis 2:13b, 16d, 18a; 7:14, 27-28; John 1:12-13; 3:3-5; 36; 5:24).<sup>1332</sup>

With this we come to the third implication of the perspective on cosmology: the earth is the place of decision. Man has to choose the spiritual world he belongs to and he has to choose it during his earthly life (Wis 5:7; John 6:51-58; 14:6).<sup>1333</sup> Human life orients towards its final state in this dynamics of different worlds. It is man's attitude towards these realms and the side he takes that determines what realm he is part of after his physical death and whether eternal life or death is his share. The state of the righteous that exists spiritually in the realm of God during his earthly life extends beyond death; physical death, therefore, does not affect his life, but he goes on living

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<sup>1330</sup> For the relation between God and the earth, see Wis 8:1; 10:1ff; 12:1; 5:17-23; 6:3-4; 7:24, 27; for the relation between Hades and the earth, see Wis 1:16; 5:6-13; 16:16-18:4.

<sup>1331</sup> For the realm of God overlapping the earth, see John 1:4; 14; 4:34; 6:38-39; 10:25; 12:49-50; 14:31; 17:4, 6-8; 18:11; 7:38-39; 14:26; 15:26-16:14; for the realm of devil overlapping the earth, see John 8:23; 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; also 7:7; 8:23; 12:31; 14:30-31; 15:18-19; 16:11, 20, 33; 17:9, 14-16.

<sup>1332</sup> For Wis see Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life*, 88-89, 164; Puech, "The Book of Wisdom," 128; for John see Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:162; Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 190; van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 206; Beasley-Murray, *Gospel of Life*, 4.

<sup>1333</sup> For the idea in Wis, see Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life*, 162-164; Gilbert, "The Origins," 173; for the importance of man's choice in John, see Anderson, *Christology*, 200.

through death (Wis 3:1-9; 4:10, 11, 14; John 5:24; 11:25-26). The wicked/unbeliever, on the contrary, will not share immortality or eternal life because they do not belong to God's realm on earth and so they experience spiritual death that culminates after their physical death (Wis 5:6-7, 13; 4:19-20; John 3:18-20, 36; 9:39, 41; 12:25).

#### 4.1.1 The Realm of God

The realm of God appears as a reality above in Wis and John, but despite its transcendence, it is determinative of human life. The realm of God overlaps the earth through wisdom and the Logos. This implies a contact between the realm of God and the earth with consequences on the life of human beings. Once being related to God, human beings become present in the divine realm and they can share immortality and eternal life, the qualities of this realm (Wis 5:5, 15; John 3:3-5, 36). On the contrary, those who do not relate to God cannot enter his realm and die (Wis 1:16; 2:24; 4:19; cf. 5:6-7, 13; John 3:36; cf. 8:44, 47).

The basis of immortality and eternal life in both texts is the will of God who creates human beings for eternal life (Wis 2:23; John 1:3-4). But Wis and John depict various images of God that are woven into a mosaic. God appears as the creator (Wis 13:1-5; John 3:16-17; 5:26), king and judge (Wis 3:8; 5:17-23),<sup>1334</sup> father (Wis 2:16; 14:3; John 1:18; 11:41)<sup>1335</sup> and friend (Wis 7:14, 27)<sup>1336</sup> of the righteous/believer. This does not only imply that the mosaic is made of several elements, but that these elements interact and form the image of God. With regards to immortality all of these images are important as they relate to different aspects of the concept. The emphasis on certain elements of the mosaic, i.e. the image of God as father in the case of John, shows that a certain aspect of eternal life is stressed. Further, in many cases, and this is especially true of John, the text reveals God through the images, qualities attributed to his mediators, wisdom and Jesus. We can see the Logos creating (1:3, 10b), but we know that it is

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<sup>1334</sup> John does not call God king, however, God's power in salvation and judgment can be seen in 3:16-17, 36; 5:21-30; 19:11; 12:31; see also the references to Jesus who has authority from the Father.

<sup>1335</sup> Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 144-145: the sapiential influence and the early Christian tradition's "insistence" that Jesus use Father-language to talk about God together form the reason of such language in John.

<sup>1336</sup> John does not use the title for God; however the disciples are called Jesus' friends in 15:13-15.

God that creates through the Logos.<sup>1337</sup> God gives the power to save and judge to Jesus, but God is the one who primarily owns this power (John 3:35-36; 19:11; 17:2).<sup>1338</sup> This is true of wisdom as well, since she mediates God's creation, his love, knowledge, and judgment (Wis 1:1-11; 6:17-21; chaps. 6-9). Yet it seems that the text of John views more extensively God through Jesus. Our research, however, does not aim to a full analysis of this question, for the important part of the doctrine of God in Wis and John for our topic is what properties of God, Jesus or wisdom are presented in the text and how these qualities and images relate to immortality and eternal life.

#### 4.1.1.1 *The Creator God and the Cosmos and the Role of Wisdom/Jesus*

Wis and John link the references to the existence of God to creation; God is perceived in terms of his existence and in the context of creation. Wis 13:1 defines God as τὸν ὄντα. John 6:57 refers to God as ὁ ζῶν. On the one hand, these terms imply a continuous existence, an absolute sense of eternity;<sup>1339</sup> on the other hand, they also imply that God can create, can give life.<sup>1340</sup> Thus, God is viewed as someone that has life and gives life.<sup>1341</sup> Immortality and eternal life is viewed here in relation to the existence of God and creation.

The act of creation results in the distinction of the realm of God and that of the earth (Wis 1:14; 9:1-2, 9; 13:1-5; John 1:3, 10b). God is viewed as a transcendent creator that is outside the earth.<sup>1342</sup> The orientational metaphors up and down that we find in both texts (Wis 5:15; 9:10,

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<sup>1337</sup> Beasley-Murray, *John*, 11; Pollard, *Johannine Christology*, 20; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:26.

<sup>1338</sup> That Jesus gets authority and power from God shows that God is above everything (14:28).

<sup>1339</sup> See Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 249; Wright, "Wisdom," 565; Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 53; Vilchez and Eynikel, "Wisdom of Solomon," 981.

<sup>1340</sup> See Newman and Nida, *A Translator's Handbook*, 209; Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 108; van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 204 n. 181; see Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:283; Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, 269-270.

<sup>1341</sup> While Wis 13:1-5 argues that creation reflects the existence and nature of the Creator, Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:377, notes: "Such concerns are, however, beyond John's purview; it is not a creator's existence that generates controversy among his audience but the creator's identification with Jesus."

<sup>1342</sup> For Wis see Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 53, 59; See also Collins, "Cosmos and Salvation," 319-330; Perdue, *Wisdom Literature*, 296; for John see Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 32.



17; 10:10; John 1:51; 3:31; 8:23)<sup>1343</sup> make us understand this distinction in terms of a contrast. The realm of God and earth are, thus, viewed as contrasting realities (Wis 9:16; John 3:12).<sup>1344</sup> While God's creating act initiates a creational contrast only, this creational contrast comes with other distinctions: the properties of the realm of God are different from the properties of the earth. God's realm is spiritual and eternal, while the earth is physical and limited (Wis 7:1-6; 8:19-21; 10:10; John 3:3-6, 12, 31). There is another distinction introduced into the cosmos by the creation: God's life is distinguished from human life. God is eternal (Wis 2:23; 7:26; John 5:26; 6:57; 11:25-26),<sup>1345</sup> and human beings are mortal (Wis 7:1; 9:14; 15:17; John 11:25; 13:36).<sup>1346</sup> Thus existence is also differentiated. Since eternal life is linked to God and his realm, it will be defined as LIFE IS PRESENCE IN THE REALM OF GOD (Wis 5:15; 9:1-2; John 1:1; 3:3, 5; 17:5, 24). Human life that is linked to the earth is structured as LIFE IS PRESENCE ON EARTH (Wis 2:1-5; John 1:9-11, 14). The difference lies in the elements of this structuring: human life that is defined as presence on earth has the notions of arrival and departure,<sup>1347</sup> whereas eternal life that is conceived as presence in the realm of God, though it has the notion of arrival in the case of the believers, but it has no notion of departure. This scheme conceives of human life as a temporary (one arrives into life through birth but has to leave life through death) and eternal life as a continuous state. The realm of God and earth is, thus, separated, as it is eternal life and human life. But Wis and John argue for a creation theology that includes eternal life in God's plan for humanity (Wis 2:23; John 1:3-4). Human life may, thus, be distinguished from earthly life since the former involves both physical life and eternal life. Eternal life is, though, not the inherent

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<sup>1343</sup> Although Wis does not define the earth as down, by defining the realm of God as up in contrast with the earth, the earth is implicitly defined as down. For the up—down opposition in John, see also the references to Jesus' descending from and ascending to the Father.

<sup>1344</sup> Bennema, *The Power of Saving Wisdom*, 177-179, and Coloe, *Dwelling in the Household of God*, 78, note the parallel between John 3:12 and Wis 9:16 that also speaks of the creational contrast between heaven and earth. Earlier Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:123, said that, among other OT phrases, *earthly* and *heavenly* in John 3:12 "suggest indirect quotation" of Wis 9:16. He understands (*The Gospel according to St John*, 1:378) the relation of the two terms not as "a matter of contrast but of degree. The 'heavenly' surpasses and overshadows the 'earthly,' for which Jewish literature still remains the most likely source."

<sup>1345</sup> For pre-existence see references in Wis 1:14; 6:7; 9:1-2; 10:1; 11:17, 24; 13:1-5; John 1:1; 8:57-58; 17:5, 24.

<sup>1346</sup> See also the references to Jesus' death.

<sup>1347</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 11.

nature of people. The notion of arrival in the metaphor that structures eternal life<sup>1348</sup> as LIFE IS PRESENCE IN THE REALM OF GOD shows that human beings have to acquire eternal life. How does then one come into eternal life? The answer lies in the dynamics of the worlds: through wisdom and Jesus<sup>1349</sup> the realm of God becomes open to human beings, and presence in God's world means sharing eternal life. Thus, immortality and eternal life is closely associated with the communion with wisdom and Jesus.<sup>1350</sup> In wisdom and Jesus the distance between the realm of God and the earth disappears<sup>1351</sup> and man's possibilities to eternal life become real.

Several features of the nature and function of Jesus allude to wisdom,<sup>1352</sup> but there are some that differ. Wisdom and Jesus function as the associates of God in the world (Wis 9:9; John 5:17-30) aiming at uniting humankind with God.<sup>1353</sup> Their unique relationship to God—both of them are

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<sup>1348</sup> Note that when I talk about eternal life in the comparison, unless I make it explicit that the reference is only to eternal life, I also imply immortality, but for the sake of clarity and brevity, I don't mention both.

<sup>1349</sup> Brown, *Introduction*, 260: "The concept of the 'Word' or *logos* finds some of its background in the Wisdom Literature." See Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:521-523. See also Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 93. Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:522, observed that "the title, 'the Word,' is closer to the prophetic 'word of the Lord'; but the description of the activity of the Word is very much like that of Wisdom." He also notes that despite that wisdom is never called "word of God," in Wis 9:1-2 wisdom is paralleled with word (*The Gospel according to John*, 1:522). See also Ringe, *Wisdom's Friends*, 41, for this latter issue and Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 373-380, for the similarity in the function of the Logos and that of wisdom.

<sup>1350</sup> The parallels between wisdom and Jesus are listed by Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, liii-lvi; Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 37-60; Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 274-275; Brown, *Introduction*, 259-265; see also Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 370-380. We shall, however, deal with these motifs only as it concerns immortality and eternal life.

<sup>1351</sup> Coloe, *Dwelling in the Household of God*, 78: in both texts (Wis 9:16-17—John 3:12-14) there is contrast between knowledge of earthly things and heavenly things; Wis argues that only through wisdom one acquires knowledge of heavenly things. Coloe refers back to John 3:7-8 where the parallel equates "being born of Spirit" with "being born from above." Then she adds (*Dwelling in the Household of God*, 78-79): "The context of verse 7 means that *anōthen* at that point probably has the spatial sense of being born 'from above.' Therefore the gospel and Wisdom assert that knowledge of God (seeing the kingdom) is only possible through the Spirit sent 'from above' (John 3:7), 'from on high' (Wis 9:17). The Nicodemus discourse will use the verb *hypsoō* (cf. *apo hypsistō*, Wis 9:17) to speak of 'lifting up' the Son of Man (3:14), and will go on to speak of God giving the only Son (John 3:16) and sending the Son into the world (3:17). These verses parallel the book of Wisdom as it speaks of giving Wisdom and sending the Spirit into the world (Wis 9:17)." See also Bennema, *The Power of Saving Wisdom*, 177-179.

<sup>1352</sup> Heinisch, *Theology of the Old Testament*, 113: "The Logos doctrine . . . agrees remarkably well with the teaching contained in the Book of Wisdom; compare but the first passage, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God. . . all things were made through him,' with Wis. 7:12, 22; 8:5; 9:4, 9, 10." See also Harris, *The Origin of the Prologue*, 10-14, who argues that the Johannine Prologue develops from Prov 8 through the Sapiential books, and this evolution marks the transition from Sophia to Logos.

<sup>1353</sup> Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 58: Jesus relates to the Father and the people the way wisdom does.

called μονογενής (Wis 7:22; John 1:18)<sup>1354</sup>—authorizes them to reveal God and bring salvation and judgment. Wisdom is called the image of God (7:26), while Jesus is said to be the only one who have seen God (1:18).<sup>1355</sup> They are both given the title *holy* (Wis 1:5; 7:22; 9:10, 17; 10:10; John 6:69).<sup>1356</sup> Thus, with respect to their relationship to God and the authority arising from this they show great similarity. The difference between them lies elsewhere: wisdom and the Logos are both divine, but wisdom is never said to be God.<sup>1357</sup> Further, wisdom is a hypostasized character, not independent of God,<sup>1358</sup> even though she shows some independence (7:22-27).

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<sup>1354</sup> Cf. Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:522. Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 107: “There is no need to place the emphasis on the ‘begetting’ (γίνομαι) aspect of this word. It is simply an indication of the uniqueness of the relationship of both Sophia and Logos to God.” However, we cannot forget that in the context of John *begetting* is accentuated. Begetting of God also becomes a metaphor of the believers’ relationship with God, of salvation. Harris, *The Origin of the Prologue*, 13, says: “behind the Only-Begotten Son of God to whom John introduces us, we see the Unique Daughter of God, who is His Wisdom, and we ought to understand the Only-Begotten Logos-Son as an evolution from the Only-Begotten Sophia-daughter.” Glicksman, “Beyond Sophia,” 96, notes that μονογενής in Wis 7:22 is not used in the context of parent-child relationship as in John; therefore he notes “something special about Jesus’ sonship; he is relationally closer to God than any other known figure.”

<sup>1355</sup> Wisdom also has similar revelatory functions; she reveals herself (6:13) and God (9:13, 17). She can do this because she is in intimate relationship with God (8:4; 9:4, 9). See Bennema, *The Power of Saving Wisdom*, 122-123.

<sup>1356</sup> Witherington, *John’s Wisdom*, 161: “Wisdom is even at one point said that to be God’s ‘holy spirit’ sent from on high (compare 9:17 to Wisd. Sol. 1:6).” Witherington concludes (*John’s Wisdom*, 161) that because of this wisdom tradition “the title ‘the Holy One of God’ is perhaps the most appropriate title for one portrayed as Wisdom come in the flesh to earth, both rejected by his own and received by a few to whom he gave eternal life, and then ascending again to heaven (cf. 1 Enoch 42).”

<sup>1357</sup> Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:522, comments: “while Hebrew thought would not say that Wisdom was God, as the Prologue says that the Word was God, nevertheless Wisdom is divine.” Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 275, on the other hand says: “But we are still far from anything which could justify the statement θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος, even though the functions assigned to Wisdom are often clearly those which are elsewhere assigned to God Himself.” He also notes (*The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 275 n. 1) that Wis 10 “begins by attributing the acts of God recorded in Genesis to Σοφία, as distinct from God (cf. x. 9-10 σοφία . . . ἔδειξεν αὐτῷ βασιλείαν θεοῦ). From xi. 8 onward, however, such acts are attributed directly to God (addressed in second person). The transition from the one to the other is almost imperceptible: xi. 1-4. At the same time, though Wisdom is the εἰκὼν of God, the ἀπαύγασμα of eternal light, and so forth, such a statement as θεὸς ἦν ἡ σοφία is unthinkable.” Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 97, claims that in John 1:1c “ἦν is to be exegeted in the light of v. 3. So when Sophia is called the architect of all things (Wis. 7.21—ἡ πάντων τεχνίτις . . . σοφία), she stands in precisely the same relationship to God” as the Logos in John. “Thus although we cannot find the explicit statement θεὸς ἦν ἡ σοφία in the Wisdom corpus,” the idea is there (Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 97). See also Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 130, who parallels John 1:1c with Wis 7:25ab. See also Ringe, *Wisdom’s Friends*, 49, who also finds that Wis 7:21 and Prov 3:15 “come close” to the idea in John 1:1-5.

<sup>1358</sup> See Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 45. Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:236-241, parallels the creative act of the Logos with that of wisdom; however, he notes that the Logos is not an emanation, the

John's Logos, on the contrary, is conceived as a person,<sup>1359</sup> different from *the* God but God in nature (1:1).<sup>1360</sup> The differences between wisdom and the Logos disappear if we consider their functional relation to God and human beings, their role and operation in salvation and judgment.<sup>1361</sup> Wisdom and the Logos function not only in the context of humankind, but in the context of the whole world. Their double aspect, transcendent and immanent<sup>1362</sup> enables them to link the realm of God and the realm of human beings.<sup>1363</sup> The incarnation of the Logos is another essential difference between them: wisdom is sometimes described in physical terms as living in the world (6:12-16; 7:22-27; 8:16); however she is never conceived in a way the incarnated Logos is, an actual historical figure.<sup>1364</sup> The metaphorical structuring also adds something to this

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power of God, or an idea based on which the creation is modelled, but he is "fully divine" and "a person" (240-241).

<sup>1359</sup> There is discussion on the personal nature of Logos in the Prologue; among those that argue that the Prologue speaks about personal existence of the Logos, see Cullmann, *Christology*, 250; Ridderbos, "The Structure and Scope of the Prologue," 180-201; Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 106-107; Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:232-233.

<sup>1360</sup> Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, liii-liv: "St. John's Logos-doctrine differs from Wisdom-doctrine in only one point, but that is the vital one, which marks the distinction between two dispensations, viz. 'The Word was God.'"

<sup>1361</sup> See Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 128. For the similarities in function, see also Moeller, "Wisdom Motifs," 93-97; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:CXXIII-CXXIV. Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 374, notes that "similar sorts of roles are predicated of Wisdom" in Wis 10-19 to what Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 106, sums up as the work of the Logos before incarnation. Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, liv, already noticed that the similarities "may be seen when we consider that it is possible to substitute the name of Christ for that of Wisdom in the doctrinal parts of Wisdom, and to find a fairly complete anticipation (except in the one particular) of Johannine Logos-doctrine."

<sup>1362</sup> Wisdom is shown living with God (Wis 8:3-4; 9:4, 9-10, 17) and also with humankind (Wis 1:7; 6:12, 14; 7:10, 14, 27-28; 8:1-18; 9:10). Jesus is also conceived transcendent (John 1:1-2, 18; see also the references to descent and ascent) and immanent (John 1:9-14; 17:11). But while Jesus comes into the world once (John 3:13, 31f; 6:33, 38; 7:29; 8:42; 13:3; 12:49; 16:5, 28; 17:7f; 18:37) and then ascends to the Father (John 3:13; 6:62; 7:33-34; 8:14, 21; 13:3, 33, 36; 14:2-4, 28; 16:5, 10, 28; 20:17), wisdom is described ever present in the world (Wis 7:22-23; 8:1). However, the idea remains that wisdom is both transcendent and immanent; she is depicted as living with God (Wis 8:3-4) and having descended from God (Wis 9:4, 17). Further, although wisdom is present in the world, the communion of man with her is not automatic, but it depends upon one's attitude. For the parallels regarding the immanence and transcendence of wisdom and Jesus, see Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 274; Ringe, *Wisdom's Friends*, 49-50.

<sup>1363</sup> Bennema, *The Power of Saving Wisdom*, 168, draws a parallel between wisdom showing the Kingdom of God to Jacob (Wis 10:10) and Jesus' revelation of the Kingdom of God to Nicodemus (John 3:5).

<sup>1364</sup> Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:CXXIV: "Wisdom Literature offers better parallels for the Johannine picture of Jesus than do the later Gnostic, Mandaean, or Hermetic passages sometimes suggested. . . . However, John has noticeably modified details of the presentation of Wisdom by introducing a much sharper historical perspective than is found in the OT poems. If Jesus is incarnate Wisdom, this incarnation has taken place at a particular place and time, once and for all." Brown also says that the demythologization of wisdom concept we see in John in presenting Jesus as the incarnate wisdom also appears as a tendency in Sir 24:23;

difference. Although Wis also speaks of wisdom coming down and going up (9:9-10, 17)<sup>1365</sup> and being in the world and human beings (Wis 1:7; 8:1; 7:22-27; chaps. 6-9—LIFE IS PRESENCE), she never becomes immanent in the world the way Jesus does (John 1:14).<sup>1366</sup> Wisdom is portrayed guiding human beings (14:6; 18:3; also 9:1-18), but she does not become one of them and she does not travel through earthly life as Jesus does; therefore, no metaphor can be seen that describes wisdom's earthly presence as a journey in Wis since her earthly presence is not a movement through life but it is permanent (8:1). Nevertheless, their qualities, relations (to God and human beings), role and the way they function bear striking similarities. It is wisdom and the Logos<sup>1367</sup> through which God creates all and gives life (Wis 7:21; 8:6; 9:1-2, 9;<sup>1368</sup> John 1:3).<sup>1369</sup>

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Bar 4:1 that identify wisdom with the Law given on Sinai and Wis 10 where wisdom is said to be present in the lives of the patriarchs (*The Gospel according to John*, 1:CXXIV). Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:259: "The 'coming' of the Logos has a mythological ring . . . But the Wisdom literature already used this type of imagery, in a non-mythological sense." Cf. Wis 7:7, Sir 24:6f. Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:259, goes on: "The whole train of thought seems to be transposed on the Christian level, Wisdom replaced by the Logos, the pitching of the tent fully realized by the Incarnation."

<sup>1365</sup> Moeller, "Wisdom Motifs," 94; Painter, *The Quest for the Messiah*, 147; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:CXXIII, notices the parallel between Wis 9:10 and John 1:14; 3:31; 6:38; 16:28, in particular between Wis 9:16-17 and John 3:13. See also Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, lv. Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 370: "Knowing the pilgrimage of Wisdom which has come down from above and returns there, is the key to understanding who Jesus is in this Gospel." Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 135: "The most significant text relating to the descent of Wisdom is found in Wisdom 9, but the idea was already inherent in the tradition of Proverbs long before Wisdom of Solomon was written." As to Wis 9:10, he notes (*Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 136): "As in the case of the Johannine Jesus, so also Sophia is sent out from above to make known what is pleasing to God. Even the vocabulary is similar to the Johannine usage with the interchangeability of (ἐξ) ἀποστέλλω and πέμπω. This similarity also extends to the understanding of Sophia as given (δίδωμι) by God"; cf. Wis 9:17. The manner and purpose of wisdom's sending "prefigures the coming of the Johannine Jesus" (Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 136).

<sup>1366</sup> Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:551-552, notes that although wisdom's descent (Wis 7:7, 27; cf. 8:3; 9:4, 10; Sir 24:3-12) provides a parallel for the coming down of Jesus, "the notion of Wisdom herself ascending to heaven is not included . . . Thus Wisdom literature suggests the notion of the descent of Wisdom, but does not link it with that of the ascent as a salvific act. . . . From all this it appears that Judaism shows examples of thinking in spatial and vertical categories, and at times of the notion of descent and ascent, but that that of the redeemer, as given in John, cannot be found there." Glicksman, "Beyond Sophia," 89, notes that "this concretizing or historicizing of Sophia in the person of Jesus Christ results in a different mode of revelation. . . . According to John's Gospel, by encountering Jesus one has a more direct encounter with the Father."

<sup>1367</sup> Witherington criticizes Scott's statement in *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 244—already formulated by Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, liv—that John "has introduced Jesus as the Logos because of that word's ability to satisfy both the requirements of the *maleness* of the human Jesus and the *equivalence* to the female Sophia." Witherington says that "Jesus' maleness did not stop the First Evangelist from calling Jesus *Sophia*"; John uses *logos* because it conveys more the idea of comparison of Jesus as the Word with the Torah being the Word, so "for conceptual not gender reasons" (*Jesus the Sage*, 370 n. 102). See also Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:354.

They are described pre-existent and eternal (Wis 6:22; 9:1-2, 9; John 1:1; 17:5);<sup>1370</sup> therefore, they can give life (Wis 6:18; John 14:6). They uphold the principle upon which the world was created. Wisdom is depicted establishing and protecting the goodness, righteousness, incorruption and harmony in the world that is the order of the creation, both nature and humankind. This function of wisdom includes her attempts to save the righteous<sup>1371</sup> that is give him immortality by making the righteous the child and friend of God, by teaching<sup>1372</sup> and testing him.<sup>1373</sup> She also acts as the examiner and judge of the wicked (1:4-7). Although the Gospel's text does not use the terms employed by Wis, such as protecting the order, harmony or goodness of creation, yet, there is a similar role attributed to Jesus.<sup>1374</sup> The Logos is proclaimed the light of

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<sup>1368</sup> Heinisch, *Theology of the Old Testament*, 113; Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, liv; Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:236, also mention Wis 7:12b (wisdom is the mother of all things), but the context seems to imply that the statement rather refers to the gifts of wisdom and not to creation.

<sup>1369</sup> For the parallels, see Harris, *The Origin of the Prologue*, 11; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:522; Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 274; Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 108; Ringe, *Wisdom's Friends*, 49; Painter, *The Quest for the Messiah*, 146; Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:483. Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 98, says that Wis 7:21 "comes closer" to John 1:3 and also adds: "The author of John's Prologue wants to leave the reader in no doubt that the tradition of Wis. 9:1-2 is being followed, where no mention of Sophia's own creation comes into play." Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 131, and Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 99, compare John 1:3-4 with Wis 8:13 against the idea of eternal life as God's gift. Ringe, *Wisdom's Friends*, 49: "portraying the λόγος as God's companion and coworker in creation," John 1:3-5 "echoes Wisdom's role in creation, and in particular her connection to the gifts of life and light (Prov. 8:22, 27, 35; Sir. 1:4; 4:12; 24:1-22; Wisd. Sol. 7:21, 29-30; 9:1-2), and her role in the contrast between light and darkness (Prov. 1:20-33; 8:32-36; Sir. 24:1-22; Wisd. Sol. 7:29-30)."

<sup>1370</sup> Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, liv, already notices the parallel between Wis 9:9 and John 1:1. Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:CXXIII, and Painter, *The Quest for the Messiah*, 146, mention the parallel between Wis 6:22 and John 1:1; 17:5. Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 95-96, 133, notices the parallel between Wis 9:1-2, 9 and John 1:1. He also notices (132-133) that similarly to what we see in John, authority is related to pre-existence in Wis. For parallels to John 1:1, 4, 11, 14 in wisdom literature, see also Dunn, *Christology*, 164-250.

<sup>1371</sup> Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 196-197, draws a parallel between John 4:42 and Wis 10-11; 9:18; 10:4 and says that although the title, Saviour, is only used directly with reference to God (16:7), wisdom appears as the saviour of the world. See also Ashton, "The Transformation of Wisdom," 168.

<sup>1372</sup> Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, lv, parallels Wis 6:18b with John 8:51 (whoever keeps my word will never see death). He also observes (*The Wisdom of Solomon*, lvi) that loving Jesus/wisdom is related to keeping the commandments in both texts; see Wis 6:18 and John 14:15. Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 378-379, also notes this latter parallel. See Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 46-47, 49, who says (47) that the link between commandments and life is clear in John 14:23: the love of Christ, shown by keeping his commandments, means communion with Christ, and, at the same time, life.

<sup>1373</sup> See references to these functions of wisdom in Wis 2:13; 3:5-6; 6:12-21; 7:14, 27; 8:18; 9:16-18; 12:19; also chaps. 10-11.

<sup>1374</sup> Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 379: "What the author of the Wisdom of Solomon says about Wisdom/Word, John says either about Jesus or in one place about the Paraclete he will send. This Advocate is so closely connected to Jesus that it is called 'another' Paraclete, just as Wisdom, Word, and Spirit are very closely

the people (1:4, 9) similarly to wisdom (7:10, 26).<sup>1375</sup> This is the instance where the Logos may be seen as an everlasting mediator between God and the human world,<sup>1376</sup> similarly to wisdom.<sup>1377</sup> Jesus comes to expose the good and the evil,<sup>1378</sup> and give eternal life through making the believer the child of God (1:12) and his friend (15:13-15), by teaching (14:15)<sup>1379</sup> and revealing God and his life (1:18; 7:16-17).<sup>1380</sup> He delivers judgment, and throws the evil out of the earth (12:31; 16:11, 33).<sup>1381</sup> Observing the affinities between wisdom and the Logos,

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intertwined in the Wisdom of Solomon.” The similarity between wisdom and the Paraclete is already recognized by Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2:715, 1139; Harris, *The Origin of the Prologue*, 11; Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, lvi. Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 2:964, however, observes a problem with relating the Paraclete to wisdom, which he seems to solve: “There is, however, a serious weakness in the argument that John draws his imagery of the Spirit primarily from Jewish wisdom traditions. The problem with the connection is not that it occurs too rarely in early Jewish literature; given the rarity of discussions about the Spirit in this literature, this is to be expected. The problem is rather that the connection is rarely demonstrable outside Wisdom of Solomon. While John unquestionably could have drawn directly upon Wisdom of Solomon rather than upon a common portrayal of the Spirit in the milieu, one might have expected that he would have made clearer allusions to that book here (as he does, e.g., in 3:12–13) if he intended his readers to recognize this dependence. He could, for instance, have replaced his Παράκλητος with Σύμβουλος. On the other hand, he perhaps substituted the former term for the latter as more clearly connoting a forensic context (though even this term is not necessarily forensic). Nevertheless Wisdom of Solomon was both early and widespread, and may constitute a primary source for John’s image here. The evidence that wisdom tradition ultimately stands behind the personhood of the Spirit in John, whether mediated through Christian tradition or (more likely) modeled after Jesus’ personhood, is sufficient for one to say that it is an entirely reasonable hypothesis.”

<sup>1375</sup> See Harris, *The Origin of the Prologue*, 43; Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, liv; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:CXXIII; Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 274; Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:253; Witherington, *John’s Wisdom*, 157; Ringe, *Wisdom’s Friends*, 49, 61; Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 99; Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 131, 278. Glicksman, “Beyond Sophia,” 91, notes that Wis is “unique among Jewish wisdom literature in the way that it portrays Sophia as reflecting divine light.”

<sup>1376</sup> See Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 106-107; Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:242, 244.

<sup>1377</sup> We are not so interested in discussing the analogy between wisdom and the Logos since it is discussed enough in other works that analyse the wisdom background of John’s Logos. We are focusing on the concept of eternal life that bears striking similarity with Wis.

<sup>1378</sup> See Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:CXXIV; Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 377. Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:CXXIV; Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 167-168, notice the paralleling language of Prov 1:28; 8:17; Sir 6:27; Wis 6:12 and John 7:34; 8:21; 13:33.

<sup>1379</sup> Jesus also instructs and tests the disciples (see esp. 6:25-67). Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 378-379: John 14:15 echoes Wis 6:18, while “John 13-17 seems to characterize Jesus as a sage.”

<sup>1380</sup> See Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, liv; also Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:541. Anderson, “Why This Study Is Needed,” 63, comments: “In the Fourth Gospel, Jesus not only brings divine wisdom; he is the Word and Wisdom of God (Proverbs 8:22-30) to the world and imparts saving knowledge to all who believe.”

<sup>1381</sup> Ziener, “Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium,” 403-406, and Clark, “Signs in Wisdom and John,” 201-209, relate the signs in John to the signs in Wis 11-19. Ziener, “Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium,” 405: the evangelist is drawing on Wis in his conception of signs, but also following the order in Wis. He argues

Dodd<sup>1382</sup> remarks: “In such a setting it is somewhat less difficult to find an approach to the enigmatic statement, ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο, for, although it would be idle to look for any real anticipation of the Johannine doctrine of incarnation, the idea of the immanence of Wisdom in men, making them friends of God, provides a kind of matrix in which the idea of incarnation might be shaped.” The difference we observe is that we do not see the harmony of creation and God in John to such an extent we see it in Wis where the creation allies with God against evil and changes to save the righteous (5:20-23; chaps. 11-19). Both Wisdom and Jesus are the premise of salvation. We can say that creation and salvation is linked in the figure of wisdom/the Logos: God planned and created the world with view of human immortality/eternal life. Wisdom and Jesus make possible for human beings to trespass their limitedness and relate to God. Through wisdom and Jesus a dynamic communication takes place between God and man, which unites humankind with God.<sup>1383</sup> This union elevates man into the realm of God.<sup>1384</sup> Thus even

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(“Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium,” 58) that John does this in order to prove Jesus’ messianic kingship: “Since, according to Jewish belief, the messianic redemption corresponds to the redemption from Egypt, he can correlate them to prove that it is taking place in the messianic activity of Jesus” [own trans.]. Brown, *Introduction*, 262 n. 96, however, has the opinion that “the exact correspondence requires great imagination.” Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 376 n. 122, also notes that the “argument that the sequence of signs in John follows the sequence in Wis 11ff. is not fully convincing,” while Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 168, observes that some of Clarks’ parallels “are rather strained.” However, Scott adds: “Since we have already seen numerous ways in which the Fourth Gospel’s Sophia Christology parallels the traditions of Wisdom of Solomon, this further connection seems to strengthen the claim that the Fourth Evangelist may well have known and used that book as part of her/his background material. Even if we allow that the Evangelist used an already existing source, it may very well either have been considerably reworked in the light of Sophia traditions contained in Wisdom of Solomon, or it may already have contained hints of that tradition” (*Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 168).

<sup>1382</sup> Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 275.

<sup>1383</sup> Our further discussion reveals certain aspects of receiving life that Wis and John share: on the one hand, human beings have to be open in order to receive wisdom and Jesus; on the other hand, wisdom and Jesus anticipate man’s search for God.

<sup>1384</sup> Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1: CXV-CXVI, asks the question whether salvation in John is vertical or horizontal. He comes to the conclusion that it is both. Jesus comes from above, and brings the life of God to the people as a heavenly gift. People will be part of the family of God, born of above. They are drawn to Jesus (12:32) and will reside in the Father’s home after death—this is the vertical view. But the Prologue links salvation to the creation (1:3): God created human beings for life. Jesus’ coming into the world becomes part of the Jewish salvation history as the fulfilment of the Jewish expectations. Moreover, John also reflects on the existence of the Church. Brown concludes that the vertical view emphasizes the uniqueness of Jesus’ salvific act, whereas the horizontal view “establishes a relationship between this intervention and salvation history” (*The Gospel according to John*, 1: CXVI). He also notes that such a view was already present in Wis (*The Gospel according to John*, 1: CXVI). We agree with Brown that salvation in Wis is both vertical and horizontal. On the one hand, the world of God overlaps the earth: wisdom comes from above to below to bring immortality as the gift of God; the righteous as the child of God becomes part of the above, and



before his physical death, man becomes part of God's world (now living in two realms, the earth and the realm of God), and thus also becomes part of the life of God that is eternal life. After his physical death, this spiritual world he has chosen becomes definitive. We can grasp aspects of present and future eschatology in both Wis and John that our further discussion will unfold.

All these similarities we have seen above give us a good impression about the affinity in the thinking of Wis and John about the concepts of God, the agent of salvation and human beings, and about the way these concepts relate to each other and to the concepts of immortality and life.

#### 4.1.1.2 *Kingship and Judgment*

The expression βασιλείαν θεοῦ appears in one single text in the LXX, Wis 10:10,<sup>1385</sup> which, according to Coloe, is “a more likely intertext” for John 3:3, 5 than the Synoptics.<sup>1386</sup> I do not intend to evaluate this claim against the Synoptics, but show the characteristic features of the Kingdom of God in John and Wis and let the reader decide about the issue. The Kingdom of God appears as a cosmological entity in Wis as God's heavenly realm with angels (5:5; 10:10).<sup>1387</sup> Although one could explain 10:10 differently,<sup>1388</sup> the references to the throne of God above in 8:3; 9:4a, where wisdom comes from, underpin a cosmological reading of 10:10. The Kingdom of God, however, is related to and described in terms of different qualities: peace (3:3), love

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experiences there the fulfilment of immortality after God takes him up to heaven. On the other hand, although Wis is almost as vague with regards the question of an end-time judgment as John, it links the working of wisdom to the world. Wisdom works within the world; she was present at the creation and orders the world ever since. The creation points to immortality; eschatology is linked to creation and salvation history.

<sup>1385</sup> The reference to the kingdom in 6:4 and 6:20 seems to have different meaning; the former text probably refers to the earthly rule of the kings, while the second reference is to the eschatological kingship inherited by the righteous.

<sup>1386</sup> Coloe, *Dwelling in the Household of God*, 75; she says that the history of Israel viewed through Wis is the context in which one should look at this passage. Similarly, 1:51 (Jesus' promise to Nathanael that he would see the opening of heaven) echoes Jacob's story through Wis 10:10, also “confirmed in the second allusion to Jacob in John 3:13, with its language of ‘ascending,’ ‘descending,’ ‘heaven,’ and ‘Son of Man.’” Genesis 28, Wisdom 10:10, and John 1:51 provide the rich intertext for understanding the Nicodemus pericope. In Jesus, the Son of Man/divine Wisdom has ascended from heaven and the heavens have been opened, enabling access to the kingdom of God for the one who is born anew” (*Dwelling in the Household of God*, 75). The parallel between Wis 10:10 and John 3:3 was also noted by Borgen, “God's Agent,” 146 n. 3, and Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:537.

<sup>1387</sup> See Glicksman, *Wisdom of Solomon* 10, 125.

<sup>1388</sup> Collins, “The Kingdom of God in the Apocrypha,” 105: “more spiritual, or ethical sense.”

(3:9), truth (3:9), power (3:8), protection (3:1; 5:15-16). The qualities of the Kingdom of God reflect a conception that understands the Kingdom as proximity of God, well-illustrated in the sorites of 6:17-20. In this way, besides denoting the realm of the divine, the Kingdom of God becomes a metaphor for the relation between God and the righteous, and at the end, for immortality. The Kingdom of God, thus, gets soteriological connotation in Wis as well. The image of the elevated righteous ruling under God's reign in 3:8 again associates the Kingdom with eternity and underlines the soteriological aspect of it.

In John the term Kingdom of God appears in 3:3, 5 with a quite strong soteriological connotation.<sup>1389</sup> The concept also includes the notion of a spiritual realm where God lives,<sup>1390</sup> but since the entrance to this realm is through birth in John, the text shows a shift from the Kingdom of God to eternal life, via family concept.<sup>1391</sup> Thus the soteriological aspect of the Kingdom is underlined; entering the Kingdom of God conceptually agrees with receiving eternal life.<sup>1392</sup> The spiritual realm of God, further referred to as *the above* or *heaven* (1:51; 3:31), has various related qualities; we actually find the same qualities we observed in Wis: power, protection, truth, peace, unity, love and life.<sup>1393</sup> These qualities emphasize the soteriological feature of the realm of God, of which the Kingdom of God is one expression. The Kingdom of God in John structures the relation established in Jesus between the believer and God, which results in life.

My focus was to view the images and properties of the Kingdom and kingship against the background of immortality and eternal life and to see how they relate to these concepts. The two dimensions, cosmological and soteriological dimensions of the Kingdom of God are both important with regards to the concepts of immortality and eternal life. The cosmological feature of the Kingdom of God emphasizes that salvation comes via a relation to another world, the divine world of God.<sup>1394</sup> Another existence overlaps the human world and the righteous starts

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<sup>1389</sup> See Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 37; Koester, *The Word of Life*, 64.

<sup>1390</sup> Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:366-368.

<sup>1391</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 376-378. See also Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 37; Koester, *The Word of Life*, 64; Ladd, "The Kingdom of God—Reign or Realm?," 230-238.

<sup>1392</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 175 n. 72.

<sup>1393</sup> See 5:21-23 for power, 10:28-29; 14:23 for protection, 3:12; 1:14, 1:17; 8:31-32, 40 for truth, 16:20-33; 20:19, 21, 26 for peace, 17:21-24; 3:16; 14:21; 16:27 for unity and love, and 1:1; 5:24, 26; 6:57; 17:5, 24 for life.

<sup>1394</sup> See Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:366-368.

living in this other world as well. As a consequence, he gets a new existence, an eternal existence besides the earthly one, which makes him live forever.<sup>1395</sup> The other aspect of the Kingdom of God emphasizes the aspect of salvation; it implies a relation between God and the righteous/believer that saves him from death.

The kingship of God (and of Jesus) is also viewed in terms of these two dimensions. It has both soteriological and cosmological meaning (Wis 6:3; 5:17-23; John 19:11; 3:16-21), although the soteriological connotation, especially in John, seems more underlined. None of the texts uses this title for God, but notwithstanding the absence of the title they both use the properties of the king domain to characterize God as a universal ruler: power, judgment, prosperity, protection and benevolence are the qualities mapped into the image of God as king. God entails the functions and qualities of the ideal king. Wis pictures God as the king of his realm (3:8) and of the earth (6:3-4). As a consequence, the creation and people on earth are under God's rule that is sovereign over all (12:15-16). God orders the world (1:14; 8:1; 12:15), but also protects this order. To this end, he fights against unrighteousness and injustice (5:17-23). As part of keeping the order of the world, God saves the righteous; the righteous, who is in the hand of God, receives eternal life and he will not know death (3:1-9; 5:15-16). As the Lord of the cosmos, he uses the creation as his tool to fight against evil (5:21-23) and save the righteous (chaps. 11-19). The Johannine God is also all-powerful (19:11).<sup>1396</sup> Reading John 1:3-4 we can see a world created for life. God protects the order of the created world by throwing the devil out (12:31; 16:33). Devil, the murderer (8:44) contrasts the God of life. The king who accepts the believers into his family protects them from death (10:28-29; 14:23). Jesus' kingship (John 1:41, 49; 18:36-37) is the revelation of God's reign. His walking on the water (6:19), changing of water into wine (chap. 2),<sup>1397</sup> feeding of the multitude (chap. 6), as well as the scene in the olive garden (18:1-10) disclose Jesus' power over creation. Jesus the Messiah King also has power to save the believers from death by giving them life (3:16-21; 20:31; also chap. 11). These instances show

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<sup>1395</sup> See Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 48, who parallels the idea of life as presence in the two books. See also Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life*, 88-89, 162-164, and Koester, *The Word of Life*, 32.

<sup>1396</sup> Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, lvi, also draws parallel between John 19:11 and Wis 6:3.

<sup>1397</sup> Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 183: the great amount of wine in John 2:1-11 points at the "abundance of Sophia's provision"; cf. among all Wis 7:11, 14.

that the power of God, on the one hand, is understood in soteriological terms: God saves the righteous/believer from death (Wis 5:15-15; John 3:16-21). On the other hand, God's power also has cosmological effects expressed as keeping the harmony and order of the cosmos (Wis 1:14; John 19:11).

The order of the cosmos is related to the concept of judgment. The ancient king also had the function of a judge. Wis presents a righteous God that fights against unrighteousness, defeats and judges the wicked (1:6-10; 5:17-23; 6:7). God as judge decides upon the fate of human beings. The wicked will be judged and condemned (4:19-5:23), but the righteous will not be judged; therefore he lives forever (5:1-5). This does not mean that the righteous will not undergo a kind of judgment since wisdom's presence exposes good and evil (Wis 1:1-5; 6:12). This judgment results in the separation of the wicked and the righteous in terms of their spiritual belonging. This judgment, however, does not imply condemnation for the righteous. Judgment in the sense of condemnation will only be experienced by the wicked and its consequence is death. John also preserves the same connotations of judgment. Those who believe will not be judged, whereas the unbelievers will be judged and they perish (3:36; 5:24). Nevertheless we encounter judgment in the sense of examination for all in John, too; Jesus' coming into the world exposes good and evil (1:12; 3:19-20; 9:39).<sup>1398</sup> As in Wis, this latter meaning of judgment does not imply condemnation in the case of the believers.

The royal metaphor also extends to the righteous in Wis: the righteous is created to be king on earth (6:3ff), and then king in God's kingdom after death (3:8). The idea of the regality of man runs through the tractates on the creation (6:3ff) and comes to completion when the exalted righteous rules under God's reign in the Kingdom of God (3:8). The image of the righteous' eternal rule in God's kingdom is equated with immortality (5:15-16). The text underlines that kingship does not only have soteriological connotation, but cosmological as well: man has to rule right on earth in order to rule eternally (6:21). These two aspects are related since wise rule on earth is the criterion of the eternal rule in the Kingdom of God. John does not explicitly use the royal metaphor in the case of the believer, but the believer becomes part of the family of the

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<sup>1398</sup> Brown, *Introduction*, 263, also noted this parallel.

king; thus it is implicitly affirmed that he becomes the child of the king (1:12-13; 3:3, 5)<sup>1399</sup> with the power and authority that comes from this status (1:12).<sup>1400</sup>

Another aspect of kingship metaphor, closely associated with our texts is mercy and love. The Hellenistic kingly ideal also projected the quality of benevolence.<sup>1401</sup> We see this feature of God in Wis and John as well. God is both righteous and loving; these two qualities go together (Wis 1:6; John 3:16-18). Wis 11:24-26 and John 3:16-17 especially emphasize the idea of mercy and love as motivation for God's salvific acts.<sup>1402</sup> The presence and act of wisdom and Jesus is an extension of God's love (Wis 1:6; 7:23; John 15:9). The righteous/believer also has to learn humanity, benevolence and love (Wis 12:19; John 13:15).<sup>1403</sup>

As another quality of the ancient king, taking care of cultic order appears in Wis and John. Wis 3:14 shows the restoration of the cultic order by placing the eunuch in the temple of God, whereas John 2:13-22 shows Jesus cleansing the temple and creating a new order that is based on the belief in him (8:12-58) and remaining in him (15:4-5).<sup>1404</sup> However, we have to note that none of the two books emphasize the cultic aspect.<sup>1405</sup>

Among the functions of the king there was also the assurance of prosperity and fertility of the nation. This function can be observed in both texts. Wis 3:13-14; 11:4; 16:20-26; 19:21 perceives God as the king who promises fertility and well-being to the righteous. God provides Israel with water and manna; the barren woman will bear fruits. Wis also mentions the unrighteous, again in an agricultural context (4:3-6), saying that their fruits will be useless. The idea is that unless wisdom is the *root* of one's life (3:15; 15:3), human life is useless and accursed. Only the union with God of which wisdom is the root gives real prosperity that is eternal life. The image of the vine and branches in John has similar message, and the Gospel used a very similar way to transmit this message. The Father is perceived as the gardener, Jesus as the vine, while the

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<sup>1399</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 174.

<sup>1400</sup> See the discussion below on the metaphor being in the hand of God.

<sup>1401</sup> Jaubert, *La notion d'alliance*, 364.

<sup>1402</sup> Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 377: salvation is God's intention—cf. Wis 2-3; John 3:16-21.

<sup>1403</sup> Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, lvi, notices that God teaches through examples in these passages.

<sup>1404</sup> See Anderson, *Riddles*, 210.

<sup>1405</sup> See the discussion on Wis and John.

believers are branches that will bear much fruit (15:1-8; see also 12:24). This both points at God as the source of life and at the medium of salvation: only those who abide in Jesus will have life, similarly to those that abide in wisdom. This metaphor fits in the cluster through which John refers to God as provider of prosperity. The image of bread, water and vine (6:27; 4:12-14; 15:1-8)<sup>1406</sup> are all taken from agrarian context. God is conceived as the giver of true well that provides eternal life for those who drink from it. In chap. 15 God appears again as the giver of life in the image of the gardener, and Jesus is confused with the gardener by Mary in 20:15. The most striking beyond these metaphors is that they have soteriological connotation in both Wis and John; the images of water, bread and wine/fruits all point to the new existence of the righteous/believer in the divine realm, which will be eternal.<sup>1407</sup>

Some of the characteristics of the image of God as king (i.e. God as the provider and protector) overlap with elements we discuss at the section on God the Father; yet we found important to mention it in both places so that it becomes clear how the metaphors blend, and what elements are stressed by either image.

#### 4.1.1.3 God the Father

God is several times called Father in John and Wis (Wis 2:16; 14:3;<sup>1408</sup> John 1:18; 10:38.). The perception of God as father leads us into a metaphorical network where the union between God, Jesus and human beings is viewed in terms of family relationships: God is perceived as the

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<sup>1406</sup> Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 375: "In the seven key 'I am' sayings Jesus is characterized variously as living bread, light of the world, the door, life, and the authentic vine (cf. 6:35, 51; 8:12; 10:7, 9, 11, 14; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1, 5). All of these things are said at one point or another to come from or characterize personified Wisdom." See the parallels regarding water noted by Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 374-376; Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 118. Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 374-376; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:CXXIII, 266-267, and Thompson, *The God of the Gospel of John*, 132-133, mention Wis 16:26; Sir 24 and Prov 9:2-5 as parallels. Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 129, refers to Sir 24:17-19 as paralleling John 15:1. There are no exact parallels for the good shepherd in wisdom literature; see Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 123; Ringe, *Wisdom's Friends*, 61. However, Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 123, says that in John 10:18 life appears as the gift of Jesus, and this idea can be found in wisdom literature as well; further, the quality of the relationship between the shepherd and the sheep that is *intimacy* can be found in wisdom literature; see Wis 7:25-26, 27; 8:2-16.

<sup>1407</sup> See Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 376; McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 184; van Tilborg, "Cosmological Implications of Johannine Christology," 486-487, 489.

<sup>1408</sup> See the observation of Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 106, that Wis 14:3 is one of the few instances when God is addressed as Father in OT.

father, the righteous/believer as the child, while Jesus appears as the brother (John 20:17).<sup>1409</sup> Childhood in the family of God is obviously a special one since the righteous/believer will be the child of God. Via the family metaphor divine properties and relations are understood and explained in terms of human properties and relations.<sup>1410</sup>

The implication of becoming the child of God is getting a new existence in the family of God; LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE is combined with the family metaphor. The new existence of the righteous/believer is unlike earthly life; as the children of God they share the qualities of God and they take part in the life of the Father that is eternal life (Wis 2:23 cf. 5:15; 8:13, 17; John 6:57).<sup>1411</sup> The relation between the image of God as king and father generates another implication with regards to the childhood in this family: the righteous/believer becomes the child of a father who is king (Wis 5:1-5, 15-16; cf. the link between birth and kingdom in John 3:3-5).<sup>1412</sup> The life they receive when entering this family saves the righteous/believer from ultimate death, and enables them to live on through physical death, in other words, it makes them live forever (Wis 5:15; John 5:24). So the family metaphor implies protection from death, but life in the family of God also has ethical implication: it shapes the identity, status, character, behaviour and actions of the righteous/believer (Wis 2:12-16; John 1:12-13; 13:4-17; 15:14-19).<sup>1413</sup> In this instance Wis and John posit present eschatology: the righteous/believer get a new life during their earthly life (Wis 2:13; John 5:24). From the moment they start living in two realities, their spiritual identity as the child of God transcends earthly identity and conduct.

The family metaphor shows a relationship that is different from the one between the Creator and the created, the King and his subjects. Wis calls the righteous (2:13, 16, 18), while John calls the believers children of God (1:12). This implies that in both cases becoming the child of God requires special condition: communion with wisdom (7:14, 27; 9:6) and receiving Jesus and birth

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<sup>1409</sup> The metaphor is based on the Great Chain Metaphor since it expresses the relations of higher level entities (relation to God) in terms of lower level entities (childhood, family). For the Great Chain of Being, see Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 170-171, 204-213; Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 128.

<sup>1410</sup> See van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 163.

<sup>1411</sup> See Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, lv, for the parallels.

<sup>1412</sup> See van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 174, 381. I return to this topic later when discussing judgment.

<sup>1413</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 178-183.

from above (1:12; 3:3, 5; 15:5, 6).<sup>1414</sup> Reese mentions that the knowledge brought by wisdom is a “transforming religious experience . . . [that] makes men children and friends of God.”<sup>1415</sup> This experience can be equated with birth from above that defines the spiritual experience of entering into communion with God and thus becoming the child of God through receiving the revelation of Jesus (cf. John 1:12). The special condition of receiving wisdom and Jesus arises from God’s initiation (Wis 6:13, 16; John 3:16-17) and man’s response to it: openness to God (John 9:36) or prayer for wisdom (Wis 7:7). Communion with wisdom and Jesus, as well as the new life is, therefore, a gift of God (Wis 8:21; 9:4; John 3:27; 6:37, 44f, 65).<sup>1416</sup> Receiving wisdom actually implies what being born of God implies in John: it is a metaphor for the foundation of the communion with God that results in a new, eternal life. This new existence for the believer is expressed by the metaphor of existing as the child of God. Knowledge is the quality of this new existence (John 17:3; Wis 1:13; 2:22-23; 15:3) similarly to love, peace, power and eternal life.

We feel the need of comparing the concept of righteousness and belief. Wis emphasizes the idea of wisdom and righteousness as man’s proper attitude towards God (1:1-2; 2:12-23; 3:1-9, 13-15; 4:7-16; also chaps. 6-9),<sup>1417</sup> while John emphasizes belief (3:14-16; 3:35-36; 5:26; 6:40, 47; 11:26; 20:31).<sup>1418</sup> Righteousness and faith are relational terms; true righteousness and faith is only possible in relation with wisdom and Jesus.<sup>1419</sup> Both concepts are viewed as a process that has different stages. On the initial level there is opening up towards God (Wis 1:1-2; 3:9; 7:7; John (5:40; 6:35, 37; 9:36)<sup>1420</sup> generated by the recognition that one needs God in order to

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<sup>1414</sup> For the parallels mentioned, see Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 275, 281-282; Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, lv.

<sup>1415</sup> Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 141.

<sup>1416</sup> Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, lv, parallels John 6:65 and Wis 8:21; 9:4.

<sup>1417</sup> Ziener, “Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium,” 50-51, says that although Wis often speaks of ways of righteousness and evil, the “reader should not get confused by this terminology. The basic concern of the Book of Wisdom is not the problem of the right action, but the true faith” [own trans.].

<sup>1418</sup> Barnabas Lindars, “Δικαιοσύνη in Jn 16.8 and 10,” in *Essays on John*, ed. C. M. Tuckett, SNTA 17 (Leuven: Leuven University Press; Leuven: Peeters, 1992), 21-31, notes that δικαιοσύνη appears in John only in 16:8, 10, and its context is the judgment, thus, righteousness gets forensic sense: those who believe prove to be right before God.

<sup>1419</sup> Bennema, *The Power of Saving Wisdom*, 134-135, notes that contrary to John, wisdom literature does not call for faith-response to wisdom. “Only Sir. 4.16 and 34.8 indicate some relationship” between belief and wisdom; in Wis the object of belief is God (3:9) (Bennema, *The Power of Saving Wisdom*, 135 n. 107).

<sup>1420</sup> Ziener, “Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium,” 51: finding God in Wis (1:1) is similar to the coming to Jesus in John (5:40; 6:35, 37).



transcend his limits (Wis 8:17-9:17; John 3:6, 12). This leads to acceptance of God. In accepting God (Wis 7:27; John 1:12;<sup>1421</sup> 15:1-7), his initiative (Wis 1:2; 6:12-16; John 1:9-13, 36-38, 43, 47; 3:16-17; 5:14; 9:35),<sup>1422</sup> a relation is formed. The righteous and the believer becomes the child of God in this relation (Wis 2:13, 16, 18; John 1:12-13; 3:3, 5), which means that their faith and righteousness is completed by understanding and knowledge (Wis 2:13; John 17:3; also 3:3, 5).<sup>1423</sup> Finally, righteousness and faith also result in proper behaviour and deeds (Wis 2:12-16; 6:17-18; 8:2-15; cf. 6:4; John 14:12, 15, 21, 23; 15:10).<sup>1424</sup>

In light of the elements discussed above, we can say that the mapping of family metaphor in Wis and John shows great similarity. The family metaphor underlines the relational feature of the concepts of immortality and eternal life: only in close relation with God can one live forever. Receiving wisdom and being born of God are the salvific events that lead to the new existence of the righteous/believer as the child of God and as such have immortality and eternal life.

At the end, we would like to reflect on the notion of birth of God as entrance to the new life received through Jesus (John 1:13). This element makes the family metaphor more structured in John, but does it introduce a new aspect of the relationship between God and the believer? Based on the comparison above, I would say that on conceptual level it does not add anything other than what we find in Wis; however, it can add to the imagery: as Jesus is born into human family, so is the believer born of God, of course, in a spiritual sense.

#### 4.1.1.4 God the Friend

Friendship describes the relationship between the righteous and God in different terms and aspect. It is mentioned in Wis 7:14, 27 as the salvific act of wisdom that makes people friends of

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<sup>1421</sup> Harris, *The Origin of the Prologue*, 43, and Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, liv, note the parallel between John 1:12 and Wis 7:27b.

<sup>1422</sup> It is wisdom and Jesus who seek people. Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 156, grasps the similarities between Wis 6:16 and John 1:47, which he thinks it “may even be a direct parallel”: “Sophia seeking out those worthy of her, and Jesus Sophia seeking out Nathanael, in whom there is no δόλος.”

<sup>1423</sup> Ziener, “Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium,” 49-57: believing involves knowledge of God’s salvific will and deeds.

<sup>1424</sup> Ziener, “Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium,” 54-55, notes that the signs can lead people to God (Wis 12:27; 11:13; 18:13), but it is not enough for true faith; both Wis and John attest that true faith is based upon the word of God (Wis 18:6; John 4:48; 20:29, cf. 1:50).

God. While the term is not used for the relationship between God and the believers in John, friendship is an image of the believers' communion with Jesus (15:13-15).<sup>1425</sup> Because of Jesus' union with God, the metaphor of friendship can be extended to the relation between God and the believers;<sup>1426</sup> thus, those who are the friends of Jesus are the friends of God as well in terms of the properties of this relation.<sup>1427</sup>

This metaphor also perceives the close unity between God (and Jesus/wisdom) just like the previously discussed family metaphor, but conceiving the relation with God in terms of friendship adds more nuance to the relationship between God and the righteous/believer. It also extends our understanding of the concept of immortality and eternal life. In both texts the metaphor maps similar properties into the target that is the relationship between God and the believer. As true friends, God and the righteous/believer are united by virtue (Wis 7:14; John 15:13-15). The basis of friendship is wisdom and Jesus, which are the source of virtue (Wis 7:7-30; 8:5-7; John 15:13-15).<sup>1428</sup> Consequently, only the righteous and the believer that are in communion with God can share true friendship.

Friendship presents a relation that unites God and man in thinking and acting; Jesus commands the disciples to do his will (15:14-15), while the manner of the life of the righteous in Wis is in harmony with God (2:15-16). Other inherent qualities of this unity are openness and frankness (Wis 1:1; John 9:36; 3:3, 5; 5:40; 16:25-30), and loyalty (Wis 1-1-2; John 6:35, 37).<sup>1429</sup> God educates the righteous in Wis by chastising him, and does so to save him (3:6; 11:8-9; see also 16:11ff). Openness and loyalty leads to knowledge and confidence (Wis 1:2; 3:9; John 15:13-15) that is also an essential quality of friendship according to the ancients.

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<sup>1425</sup> Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 147: Wis 7:14, 27 a "remarkable similar concept to that of Jn 15.13-15." The parallel was also noted by Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 398.

<sup>1426</sup> Ringe, *Wisdom's Friends*, 67: "Jesus is the lover/friend whose love effects life in the beloved by granting them an intimacy with God that itself can be called friendship with God. The effect of Jesus' love is thus parallel to the work of Wisdom who 'in every generation . . . passes into holy souls and makes them friends (φίλοι) of God' (Wisd. Sol. 7:27)." See also Delcor, "The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Hellenistic Period," 486.

<sup>1427</sup> Glicksman, "Beyond Sophia," 98, notes that wisdom's followers are also called children and friends (see also Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:CXXIII; Moeller, "Wisdom Motifs," 97); however, he argues that "friendship with Jesus constitutes direct friendship with God, since Jesus is divine, whereas Sophia 'makes friends of God' in a more indirect manner."

<sup>1428</sup> See also the references to Jesus as life, truth, light, glory, grace.

<sup>1429</sup> For the literature related to friendship, see the discussion on the friendship in Wis.

Sharing was another essential quality of ancient friendship, and it appears to be essential for Wis and John as well. Unity with God means sharing in his life, goods and knowledge (Wis 8:17b-18; John 15:7, 13-15). The framework of immortality and eternal life is structured around the idea that God shares his life and the qualities of his life with the righteous/believer who, therefore, becomes immortal. There are two differences with regards the extent of sharing. On the one hand, Wis extends sharing to earthly pleasures (8:17-18), which is not mentioned in John. On the other hand, John shows us the extreme form of sharing: God gives his only son to save the believers, and Jesus lays down his life for his friends (10:15). Both texts relate friendship to love. John relates friendship with love in 15:13-15, whereas Wis mentions love in the context of friendship in 7:28.<sup>1430</sup>

Here we have to mention that neither the righteous' friendship with wisdom, nor the believer's friendship with Jesus is based on equality. It is God, wisdom or Jesus that commands and never the righteous/believer. But reciprocity is at work, here, too: the righteous/believer do the will of God (Wis 4:10, 14; John 15:14), whereas God/Jesus saves the righteous/believer from death (Wis 4:10, 11, 14; John 3:14-16).

#### ***4.1.1.5 The Mosaic of the Images of God***

The assemblage of the different images of God forms a mosaic in Wis and John. While we do not find some of the titles mentioned with reference to God—these titles sometimes appear in relation to Jesus who reveals God—the texts attribute the characteristics and functions of these concepts to God.

The importance of the mosaic lies in the images it uses, the relation and coherence of these images, and the picture we get when we observe the different elements together. We can say that the image of God—together with wisdom and Jesus—is made up of similar elements in Wis and John: God appears as creator, king and judge, father and friend. These elements are then related in the same way, so the whole picture we get of God is basically the same conceptually in Wis and John. We can see the transcendent creator who created all for life, an act that includes the

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<sup>1430</sup> Love is discussed in a separate section below.

possibility of eternal life as both texts attest when they repeatedly connect creation and salvation. God also appears as a king who saves and judges. The righteous of Wis and the believer of John will be protected by the king and they will not experience condemnation; therefore they will live forever. On the contrary, the wicked and the unbeliever will not experience the saving works of God, but only meet his judging function when they face judgment. The difference in the experience of the wicked in Wis and that of the unbeliever in John lies in their attitude towards the Creator. While the wicked in Wis do not believe in the Creator, the unbelievers in John still believe in the Creator God.<sup>1431</sup> However, even these latter do not recognize the workings of God since they do not accept Jesus.

The remaining images of God will be disclosed only to the righteous/believer: God is their father and friend. The family metaphor of which the conception of God as a father is part of perceives the righteous/believer as members of the family of God, while the friendship metaphor perceives unity and sharing in the relationship of the righteous/believer and God. Both metaphors transmit the realization of immortality and eternal life, but the use of both images strengthens the idea. The friendship of the father means that the goods the father shares with his child are his own life and qualities that is immortality and eternal life.

We could observe throughout the analysis that the idea of immortality and eternal life is linked to all these images of God. Immortality and life requires relation with the Creator, King, Father and Friend. The lack of relation with God means death, for immortality and life is only in recognizing that we are created for life, admitting the providence of God, and accepting God as our Father and Friend.

#### **4.1.2 Death and Evil**

##### ***4.1.2.1 The Realm of Death and Evil***

Wis and John deal extensively with the concept of death<sup>1432</sup> and the dominion of evil. They view them as interrelated elements of a reality that opposes God. Wis 1:16 and 2:24 links them just as

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<sup>1431</sup> See more about this difference at the discussion on the value system of the wicked and the righteous.

<sup>1432</sup> Here we do not refer to physical death.

John 8:44 does.<sup>1433</sup> Wis personifies this reality; the concepts of death and evil are metaphorically conceived by the figure of Hades (1:16; 2:24). In John, however, the devil emerges as a person,<sup>1434</sup> the father of the unbelievers (8:44). Notwithstanding this difference, the concepts behind the personified figure of Hades and the concepts that relate to the devil are the same: ignorance, unbelief, evil, death, perishing. They contrast God and his nature, qualities and actions; there is an absolute discrepancy between God and death/evil ethically. Wis extends the opposition between God and death to the origin of death; thus, claiming an ontological opposition between God and death. The text emphasizes the contrast between God and death to the point of saying that “God did not make death”; death is not coming from God (1:12-13). This opposition comes with a cosmological contrast: death and evil is placed outside the realm of God and outside the earth as the realm of Hades (1:14, 16; 2:24).<sup>1435</sup> The cosmological contrast appears in John as well since the devil stands in opposition to God’s realm (8:44; 14:30) and it will also be thrown out of earth (12:31).

Death in John is related to the devil that fathers both evil and death (8:44).<sup>1436</sup> There is no reference to where the devil comes from;<sup>1437</sup> the Gospel simply locates the devil’s dominion *down* on the earth as a reality that totally overlaps the earth (12:31; 14:30; 16:11). Thus it emerges that the reality of death and evil is described not only qualitatively, but also quantitatively in spatial terms. And here comes the difference between Wis and John. Although death advances to the earth in Wis, too, by the hand of the wicked (1:16; 2:24), the first picture we get from the earth shows Hades outside the earth (1:13). The extent of Hades’ overlapping the earth also differs. Wis presents a cosmos associated with wisdom where only the wicked are related to evil. The Gospel emphasizes that the light has come to shine in the darkness, and while Wis also urges people to connect to wisdom, John’s negative picture on the creation stresses the need for an elementary change for all people. It looks as if the partial overlapping of the earth by

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<sup>1433</sup> See Ziener, “Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium,” 48.

<sup>1434</sup> Although, as Koester, *The Word of Life*, 75, notes, compared to the other gospels “the devil is not fully personified.”

<sup>1435</sup> NB Hades/the devil is weaker (see Wis 5:17-23; 17:13; John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11).

<sup>1436</sup> Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 377: John 8:44 “could just as easily have been said by the earlier sage.” See also Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, lv, who parallels it with Wis 2:24.

<sup>1437</sup> See Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 38.

Hades becomes a total overlapping between the realm of the devil and that of the earth in John. But the two texts agree upon God's supremacy over the earth (Wis 1:11; 4:19; John 5:24, 29) and Hades/devil (Wis 5:17-23; 17:13; John 12:31; 14:30). They both view God as the Lord of creation that is more powerful than death and evil; light is stronger than darkness (Wis 7:29-30; John 1:5).<sup>1438</sup> They are also analogous with regards the consequences of people's relation to evil. Relation with Hades or the devil involves existential change. The wicked/unbeliever becomes part of the spiritual realm of death (contrary to the righteous/believer who is part of the realm of God), thereby losing relation with God (Wis 1:4-5, 16; 2:24; John 8:42-47), and, by implication, the chance of immortality or eternal life (Wis 2:24; John 3:18-19, 36; 8:44).

#### 4.1.2.2 *The Concept of Death and Its Implication for the Concept of Immortality and Eternal Life*

In general we can say that the concept of death in Wis and John overlap. We find different connotations of death in both texts. They relate these connotations to human life and immortality/eternal life in a similar way. They also agree that not all of these connotations contrast immortality and eternal life. There is a notion of death that is not set in opposition to God and immortality/eternal life, and it is not linked to evil. This notion of death is physical death that seems to be part of human condition in both texts (Wis 3:6; 7:1; John 11:25). This aspect of human existence is not a barrier in way of immortality and eternal life. Wisdom and Jesus bring the gift of life to all those who connect with them. Thus, even those who die will live because of the life received as the children of God (Wis 3:1-9; John 5:24). Wis and John both distinguish between human life that includes the possibility of eternal life in unity with God and earthly life that definitely ends with death. We shall return to this subject later when discussing

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<sup>1438</sup> Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 100, argues that Wis 7:29-30 is the proof that one should not necessarily look for Gnostic background to explain the statement in John 1:5, but he finds it in wisdom—a connection already observed by Harris, *The Origin of the Prologue*, 43; Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, liv; Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 274, and Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, 87. Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 101, links the contrast between light and darkness in John 1:5 to the creation of light in Gen 1:2 where darkness was removed by the creation of light, and to wisdom as the agent of creation, thus claiming that κατέλαβεν in 1:5 means “the overcoming of the chaotic power of darkness by the creation of light—which presents a very clear parallel to the creative work of Sophia.” Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:27, links John 1:5 to the fall and the hope of eternal life that humanity gets in Jesus. Viewed this way, John 1:5 can still be paralleled to Wis since wisdom's role is giving hope and immortality.

the anthropology of the texts; our attention turns towards one question now: what is the importance of physical death with regards to immortality and eternal life? The answer is stated clearly in Wis and John: one passes to his final state of human life, may it be eternal life or death, through physical death; physical death, thus, functions as a kind of threshold (Wis 3:6; John 11:25). The second implication is derived from human beings' attitude towards human life and death. Mortality viewed in faith urges man to open towards God (Wis 7:1-7), but mortality regarded without faith separates one from God.<sup>1439</sup> The wicked in Wis share ultimate death because of their perception of life and death. Since physical death puts an end to human life in their view, and they do not see that man is purposed for immortality, they are not related to God; thus, their fate will be in accordance with their worldview: an ultimate perishing. John likewise argues against a wrong conception of human life that leads to death in 12:25.<sup>1440</sup> Although the question here seems to be different (not whether one believes in God or in the continuation of life after death, but how much one values eternal life compared to earthly life), we understand that true life implies believing in and living according to the higher reality and, thus, valuing eternal life more than the earthly one. So, one cannot live if one lacks devotion to the life of God. If you limit your life to earthly existence, you die.

There is another aspect of this subject that John discusses in conformity with Wis. Similarly to the wicked in Wis, the unbelievers in John claim their own truth upon life and God; this leads them not to accept the truth of wisdom and Jesus and, as a result, they die (Wis 2:1-5; cf. 5:6-14; John 8:24-47). The attitude of the wicked and the unbeliever discloses that it is not physical death that puts an end to their life; they experience another type of death, although not aware of it, spiritual death.<sup>1441</sup> Spiritual death is the consequence of separation from God; since there is no life apart from God, and the quality of the realm of evil is death, the wicked/unbeliever experience spiritual death (Wis 5:6-7, 13; John 12:35; 5:24). Wis and John mention similar sins

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<sup>1439</sup> Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 51: "What distinguishes the righteous from the wicked is not so much their different moral behavior. The dividing line is deeper; their views of life are different, the just believe in a life after death, but the wicked believes that man ceases to exist with the earthly death. In their moral behavior both just pull the consequences of their beliefs" [own trans.].

<sup>1440</sup> See also the section on mortality.

<sup>1441</sup> See Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 45.

that lead to separation from God: ignorance (Wis 13:1-5; John 3:3, 5, 12),<sup>1442</sup> unbelief (John 3:16-17, 36; cf. Wis 1:2; 3:9) and wrong thinking (Wis 1:3; 2:1-5; 5:4; John 6:2; 10:20<sup>1443</sup>).<sup>1444</sup> Both texts refer to γογγύζω, grumbling as a sign of unbelief and wrong thinking (Wis 1:10-11; John 6:41-43).<sup>1445</sup> A further development of the involvement with evil is wrong deeds (Wis 2:6-20; John 8:44). These sins separate one from God (Wis 1:1-5; John 8:47) and relate to evil (Wis 1:16; 2:24; John 8:44). The involvement with the evil is deep and deadly in both texts: the wicked made pact with Hades and thereafter they belong to it (Wis 1:16; 2:24), while the unbelievers are called the children of the devil, the murderer (8:44). The involvement of the unbeliever/wicked with evil shows how sharp the line between God and devil is—once sided with one, you are committed.

The question is whether becoming member of the family of evil or doing evil things comes first. In John unbelief results in a relation with evil after which the unbelievers follow the deeds of their father (8:43-44), while in Wis 1:12, 16 the opposite seems to be described: the wicked do evil things before making a covenant with the devil. The difference may arise from John's familial image of the relationship with God and the devil which is seen to influence one's behaviour and actions.<sup>1446</sup> Nonetheless, we have to keep in mind that what these texts describe is probably the process of separation from God and relating to the evil: both Wis and John emphasize unbelief and wrong thinking as the root of commitment with evil, and they both underline the role of man's choice in this relationship.

Spiritual death becomes another reality besides the earthly life. While the righteous/believer is part of the reality of God, the wicked/unbeliever belongs to Hades/devil. We can notice a

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<sup>1442</sup> Ignorance is not necessarily evil; however, it develops into relation with evil unless one receives wisdom or Jesus; see how the wicked get from ignorance to evil deeds and pact with the devil in Wis 2:24 and how John relates those who do not believe in Jesus to the devil in chap. 8.

<sup>1443</sup> Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 314, parallels δαίμόνιον ἔχει καὶ μαίνεται (he is possessed by the devil and he is mad) in John 10:20 to τὸν βίον αὐτοῦ ἐλογισάμεθα μανίαν (his life is madness) in Wis 5:4.

<sup>1444</sup> Both texts also refer to blasphemy as sin against God (Wis 1:6; John 5:18; 10:33, 36), but ironically, it is Jesus that is accused of blasphemy in John (see Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:759). Jesus, however, turns the table and blames the unbelievers of blasphemy.

<sup>1445</sup> See Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 221, and Anderson, *Christology*, 206, for John; Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 65-66, for Wis.

<sup>1446</sup> See van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 320-323.



language that points to a very close relationship between the wicked/unbeliever and evil. Wis describes their relation in terms of love and friendship (1:16); John calls them the children of the devil (8:44). The relationship with evil initiates the wicked/unbeliever into the realm of death, and they experience death. They will eventually perish forever (Wis 1:11; 4:19; 3:16-17, 36; John 5:24) unless they change their location during the earthly life (Wis 11:20-26; 12:1-22; John 5:24).<sup>1447</sup> This change of location is possible until the moment of physical death when one departs to his final destination. The final destination of the wicked/unbeliever is eternal death.

Eternal death implies a judgment in the sense of condemnation (Wis 3:10; 5:17-23; John 5:24). This is the judgment the righteous/believer will not experience and therefore they will live. Thus, not only death but also judgment in this sense is set against life. The judgment of God implies a notion of punishment in both Wis and John.<sup>1448</sup> The wrath of God (Wis 16:5; 18:20; John 3:36)<sup>1449</sup> suggests that the wicked/unbeliever experience physical death as punishment (Wis 4:19; 5:17-23; John 3:36). Wis, however, extends the explanation by relating the death of the wicked to their reasoning: because they perceived death as destruction (2:1-5), they will experience it like that. As a result of the judgment one gets separated from God definitively and because there is no life apart from God, he perishes. Neither Wis nor John is clear upon the *extent* of death; it seems that this question is not important for either. But since life belongs to God and death separates one from God, those who share death will not have life. Death in this sense means absolute destruction, ceasing to exist that is the ultimate opposition of life. It includes a final and definitive separation from God (Wis 5:23; John 12:48). These latter notions of death will only be experienced by the wicked. The notions of spiritual death, death as punishment and ultimate death are set against God and life. They imply a relationship with evil and death that commits the wicked/unbeliever to perishing.

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<sup>1447</sup> See the metaphor in the section on mortality.

<sup>1448</sup> See Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 171-174; Raurell, "From ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗ to ΘΑΝΑΣΙΑ," 334; van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 211.

<sup>1449</sup> The parallels were noted by Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, lv.

### 4.1.3 The Earth and Human Life

The earth is claimed to be the creation of God in Wis 1:14; 9:1-2, 9; 13:1-5 and John 1:3, 10b. This statement posits a double aspect of the created sphere. It entails the limitedness of the earth both quantitatively and qualitatively. The beginning of the earth is marked by the act of creation (Wis 9:1-2; John 1:3).<sup>1450</sup> The earth is material as opposed to God's spiritual realm (Wis 7:1ff; 10:10; John 3:6). The properties of the earthly realm extend to its inhabitants; human life is, therefore, physical, limited and mortal on earth (Wis 7:1-9; John 3:3-6). The limitation of man implies that his attempts to reach and understand the divine sphere are also restricted (Wis 9:13-17; John 3:6, 12, 31). But the act of creation carries the possibility of opening towards the divine. The creation theology of Wis and John proclaims that God created all for life (Wis 1:14; 2:23; John 1:3-4). The creation implies the link and harmony between the Creator and the created (Wis 1:14; 9:1-2; John 1:3-4),<sup>1451</sup> as well as the perspective of immortality and eternal life as interrelated aspects. Since the earth is created by God, as an extension it is owned and ruled by God. Wis asserts God's kingship over the creation (6:4), and notwithstanding the entrance of death, the creation is still viewed in its goodness (1:14). We can grasp a difference with regards to the creation's relation to evil in John; because of the devil's rule on earth, the creation is presented totally overlapped by the evil (12:31; 14:30; 16:11). However, the same verses also emphasize the power of God over the earth (12:31; 14:30). The principles on which it was created still stand: life, goodness and relation to God.<sup>1452</sup> Here comes the second aspect of the creation: the earth is the context of salvation; it is the medium where God meets man and man

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<sup>1450</sup> The earth might be eternal in the sense of an eternity that has a beginning and no end. However, Wis is not clear on this issue, while John does not discuss it. From the fact that Wis claims the goodness and harmony of the creation (8:1) and emphasizes its role in the salvation of the righteous (5:17-23), we assume that Wis might reflect to an eternal creation: eternity in this case is not conceived in absolute sense but as a period of time that has a beginning. We did not intend to clarify this question because the concepts of immortality and eternal life in Wis and John do not relate to the earth—may it be eternal or not; they are both structured in terms of being in the realm of God—a second argument against the claim that Wis envisions the destruction of the earth. For discussion on this issue, see Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life*, 88-89; Collins, "Apocalyptic Eschatology in Philosophical Dress," 104; Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 33, 146; Kolarcik, *Ambiguity of Death*, 86, 93-94; McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 34-39.

<sup>1451</sup> See Kolarcik, "Creation and Salvation," 101; Raurell, "From ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗ to ΑΘΑΝΑΣΙΑ," 345, 347; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:25.

<sup>1452</sup> See Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:239.

meets God through wisdom and Jesus (Wis 7-9; 13:1-5; John 1:9-14; 5:24).<sup>1453</sup> The link between God and man created by the act of creation is the possibility of transgressing human limitedness. The realization of this, however, depends on the choice of man. The earth is the area where one is oriented towards eternal life or death spiritually; it is the place of decision and actions (Wis 2:13-16; 5:6-7; John 1:12; 8:44). Thus, the earth becomes not only the context of salvation, but the context of judgment as well (Wis 1:4-11; John 9:39). But both texts emphasize that the earth is first of all the context where God's love and mercy reveals itself (Wis 11:26; John 3:16-17). The metaphors of kingship, family of God, friendship with God perceive the event when man steps into God's realm and life. This spiritual transfer of human beings accomplishes at the moment of physical death.

#### **4.1.3.1 The Mortal Man**

The previous discussion on the earth placed human life in the context of the earthly sphere and God's creative act. Because of these two factors human life has a double aspect: man is mortal with the perspective of eternity. Neither Wis, nor John equates human life with earthly life. The earthly stage of human life is limited, but human life extends in the communion with God. Wis refutes the argumentation of the wicked who misunderstand human life by limiting it to earthly life; consequently, they misunderstand earthly life as well taking earthly pleasures and experiences as the totality of human life (2:1-22). The view of the wicked subsequently influences their perception of physical death, which they view as the final stage of human life. John also argues against a wrong conception of life in 6:27 and 12:25, i.e. valuing the earthly existence more than the eternal one. This section deals with the metaphors that structure earthly life. Although one could say that they have nothing to do with immortality or eternal life, as it was previously said, the earthly sphere and existence are closely related to one's afterlife. Not only is the earth the place of decision, but it is one's attitude towards this limitedness that turns him towards God or death. Accordingly, the metaphors we discuss here do not merely show certain aspects of our earthly journey, but reflect on the continuation of life, also illuminating the factors that direct one to the final state of life or to the final state of death.

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<sup>1453</sup> See Collins, "Cosmos and Salvation," 320-324; cf. Kysar, *John the Maverick Gospel*, 45.

Starting with the grumbling of the wicked (Wis 2:1-5), we can observe earthly life conceived as an entity. Because of this conception, earthly life can be quantified and qualified: it is short and limited (Wis 2:1-5; 3:1-6; John 11:1-14;<sup>1454</sup> 9:1; 12:25a). It is wrongly viewed *precious* by the wicked in Wis (2:1-5), for the precious possession is life with wisdom equated with immortality (7:8-14). Jesus also appeals to a proper understanding of earthly life in view of eternal life (12:25b). Earthly life conceived as precious possession is temporary; the wicked/unbeliever lose this precious possession in death (Wis 2:1-5; John 12:25). Used to conceive of physical life, the metaphor LIFE IS A PRECIOUS POSSESSION is, thus, related to the concept of change.<sup>1455</sup> The earthly period of human life is subject to change and time. The texts correct the view of the wicked/unbeliever by naming life with God, eternal life as a precious possession (Wis 7:7-9:17; John 6:27; 12:25). If the target is eternal life, LIFE IS A PRECIOUS POSSESSION conceives of life as most precious and permanent.<sup>1456</sup>

Several other metaphors in Wis and John describe earthly life in terms of motion and change. We can see earthly life as presence on earth (Wis 2:1-5; John 1:10). Although the metaphor seems to perceive a static presence, it has two related concepts, birth viewed as arrival (Wis 7:6; John 1:9), and death viewed as departure (Wis 7:6b; John 8:14).<sup>1457</sup> Thus, what was seen static before, involves a change of state. The transient and changing character of life is perfectly captured by way of the metaphor TIME IS MOTION. This metaphor has two cases, and both of them can be

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<sup>1454</sup> Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 377, draws a parallel between Wis 3:1-2 where it is said that the righteous seemed to have died and John 11 where Jesus insists that Lazarus is only sleeping; he then connects Wis 3:1-2 to 1:13; 2:24, which results in his concluding that those who are in the hand of God only seemingly die because “God did not make death” (1:13). He points (*Jesus the Sage*, 377) to Bruns (“Some Reflections on Coheleth and John,” 414-416), who observed the influence of the Qoheleth on John. From Witherington’s discussion it seems that physical death and life has no meaning with regard to human life in Wis and John. We would, however note few things (besides distinguishing between two notions of death in Wis 1:13 and 3:1-2). Firstly, as it was pointed out before, the author of Wis attributes the argumentation of the Qoheleth to the wicked (cf. 2:1-23); physical death has a meaning in Wis if it includes the perspective of immortality (cf. 3:6-9). Secondly, physical life is the time of choice: man has to decide upon accepting or rejecting wisdom (2:13-16; 5:6-13). Finally, physical death implies departure towards immortality and eternal life. John bears similarity to Wis in this respect: earthly life is the place of choice (11:9-10; 12:35), and physical death is departure towards the Father (14:2-4).

<sup>1455</sup> See Lakoff, “The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor,” 225.

<sup>1456</sup> Even if one can lose life by making a wrong choice, the righteous is safe. Wis claims that God saves the righteous from being perverted (4:11), and John says that no one can snatch the believer out of the Father’s hands (10:29).

<sup>1457</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 1.

found in Wis and John. In the first case the observer is static, while time is moving (Wis 2:4-5; 5:9-12; John 7:6, 8). In the second case the observer is moving, while time is static (Wis 2:1; John 12:27).<sup>1458</sup> Another metaphor that conceptualizes life in terms of motion and space is LIFE IS A JOURNEY. It appears very emphatically in Wis and John (Wis 5:7; 11:1-2ff; John 11:9-10; 12:35). The metaphorical structuring perceives earthly life in terms of a journey, a path on which human beings proceed. Thus, the metaphor involves the notions of motion and space. The travellers, i.e. human beings proceed towards a destination.<sup>1459</sup> Wis and John imply two possible destinations: life or death. There are different roads leading towards these destinations: the path of God and the path of evil (Wis 2:13-16; 5:6-7; John 11:9-10). It is the travellers' choice to decide between the two roads, but his choice influences his future. If he takes the path of God, he reaches life (Wis 5:5, 15; John 14:1-31). If he takes the path of evil, he reaches death (Wis 5:13, 17-23; John 3:18-19, 36). Wisdom and Jesus are the true guides on the journey (Wis 9:1-18; 14:6; 18:3; chaps. 10-11, esp. 10:10-17; John 10:1-18; 14:6).<sup>1460</sup> The travellers reach different locations during their journey (Wis 5:5; John 5:24). Via STATES ARE LOCATIONS we understand that this refers to certain states of their life. They reach these locations or states according to the roads they take, i.e. their decisions. The righteous/believer reaches the state of life walking with wisdom and Jesus, but the wicked/unbeliever reaches the state of death.<sup>1461</sup> The metaphor makes possible to conceive of a change of state during earthly life.<sup>1462</sup> John 5:24 is a good example of this: the believer moves from death to life. A parallel image in Wis is 2:13-16 where the righteous walks on the path of God already as the child of God. As a contrast we can mention Wis 5:6-7 where the wicked walk without wisdom and do not find the way of the Lord that would lead them to the location of life. LIFE IS A JOURNEY implies the idea that earthly life is the place of decision. These decisions can be revised until one departs from earthly life towards his final state. Wis and John underline the idea of God's mercy and benevolence (Wis 11:26; John

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<sup>1458</sup> Lakoff, "The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor," 217.

<sup>1459</sup> See Lakoff, "The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor," 222-223; Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 63-64.

<sup>1460</sup> See Brown, *Introduction*, 261-262; Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 127. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 407, parallels Wis 9:11; 10:10, 17 with John 16:13 where the Spirit is said to guide people.

<sup>1461</sup> Although these metaphors in certain cases are linked together differently or extended in a different way in Wis and John, their basic structure remains the same: they are used to conceive of earthly life in terms of change and motion.

<sup>1462</sup> Cf. Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 7.

3:17). The wicked/unbeliever can turn towards God, but they can do this only before reaching the end of their earthly journey.

The metaphor DEATH IS THE END OF LIFE'S JOURNEY shows that the earthly life of the traveller has finished. But this metaphor is paired with another one, DEATH IS DEPARTURE TO A FINAL DESTINATION that shows the traveller's journey from the spiritual location he chose to his final state (Wis 3:1-6; 4:10-14; John 3:16-18a, 36a; 11:25-26; 14:2-4). These texts we used as examples refer to the destination of the righteous/believer, which is eternal life. The wicked will depart towards eternal death (Wis 4:18b-5:1-14, 17-23; John 3:18b-19, 36b). The destination may imply ascent or descent.<sup>1463</sup> Since both Wis and John relate immortality to the realm of God above, the righteous/believer ascends (Wis 4:10, 11, 14; John 1:18; 3:13; 6:62, etc.). The wicked will descend to Hades in Wis (1:16; 2:24). The final destination of the unbelievers in John is defined by the fact that the devil's rule lies on earth; therefore no notion of descent is implied. However, the text forecasts that the devil will be thrown out of the earth (12:31; 16:11, 33).<sup>1464</sup> To this it is added that the unbelievers belong to the family of the devil (8:44, 47); so one can deduce that the unbelievers do not only get separated from God, but also from the earth. So even if the metaphor is not present, the idea of separation from God and his creation is implied.

In addition there are other metaphors that perceive earthly life. The metaphor LIFE IS A FIRE views life in terms of fire that slowly extinguishes. Wis 2:2c-3 is a strong example of the metaphor where the body and soul of the wicked is seen dissolving in death. John the Baptist is called "burning and shining light" in John 5:35. Besides reflecting on the revelation of John the Baptist, the metaphor expresses the temporariness of earthly life. The metaphor is also used to structure eternal life. Wis 3:7 describes the righteous that rules in the Kingdom of God in terms of flame, while John refers to Jesus as the true light (1:5-9). In these contexts light involves permanence: it implies immortality and eternal life. A closely related metaphor that also views life in terms of a cycle is A LIFETIME IS A DAY. In Wis 2:4 we find instances of this metaphor. John makes use of it in many places: 9:4-5; 11:9-10; 12:35-36 perceive earthly life in terms of day length. The metaphor again emphasizes the temporariness of life. It also has ethical connotations in Wis and

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<sup>1463</sup> Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 11.

<sup>1464</sup> We can see apocalyptic elements here similar to the eschatological judgment scene in Wis 5:17-23.

John as well. Keeping in mind Wis 5:13a (So we also, as soon as we were born, ceased to be), we understand that it points to the destroying force of wrong actions and way of life;<sup>1465</sup> the wicked share death because they did not live their life with God. John appeals to accepting Jesus while one still has time (9:4-5; 11:9-10; 12:35-36). Thus, both texts again emphasize the idea that earthly life affects one's future.

To sum up, earthly life is expressed in terms of a precious possession that is lost, motion, journey, fire and light. All these metaphors grasp the transient, limited character of physical life, thus, setting it in opposition to immortality and eternal life that do not include the notions of motion and change but are permanent and timeless. Analysing these metaphors we can see how earthly life and physical death implies the notion of immortality and eternal life, and how earthly life influences our final state of life or death. We can again perceive that immortality and eternal life is linked to the realm of God above.

#### 4.1.3.2 *The Value System of the Wicked and the Righteous*

The two texts present us different values: wisdom, virtue, belief, knowledge, might, more, law, and others. These values organize the life, behaviour and actions of human beings. The two opposite groups, the righteous/believer and the wicked/unbeliever basically have the same values. In spite of this, the values of the righteous lead them to life, while those of the wicked lead them to death. There are several factors that define the meaning of values, and consequently, influence the behaviour and actions of a person. The values in one's value system are ranked. The highest value in one's value system shows what one's worldview is centred around, in other words, one's value system is governed by the highest value on the scale. The other values get their meaning in relation to the highest value.<sup>1466</sup> Thus the value we find on the top of the scale defines all the values of these two opposite groups.

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<sup>1465</sup> Anderson, *Christology*, 200, observes that the way of life is described "in *revelational* and *epistemological* terms. The *way of life* involves seeking truth, walking in the light, knowing the Father, believing in the Son, beholding his glory, etc." Anderson's observance led us discover new parallels in Wis. For similarly to John, Wis 1:1; 6:12 speak about seeking God and wisdom, Wis 1:13 about the knowledge of the Father, Wis 5:6 about walking in the light of righteousness (also 16:16-27(28-17:1); 17:2-18:4), and Wis 1:2; 3:9 speaks of trust and faith.

<sup>1466</sup> See van der Watt, 'Thou Shalt.'

Wis and John present striking similarities in their conception of true values. Human beings are limited not only in terms of their lifetime, but also in terms of their nature, attitude, behaviour and actions (Wis 7-9; John 3:3-6, 12, 31). The creation reflects the Creator, says Wis 13:1. This statement does not only emphasize the idea of the Creator behind the creation, but it also has the implication that all values have to be measured against God (Wis 13:3-5), an idea that also appears in John 8:42.<sup>1467</sup> Wisdom and Jesus reveal God and his values;<sup>1468</sup> consequently, only those that are united with them find true values.

For the righteous that is in communion with wisdom the highest value is life with wisdom. Their value system is centred on WISDOM/VIRTUE IS BETTER.<sup>1469</sup> This subsequently defines the meaning of other values as well. Their value system also has the values of *power* and *more*, but these concepts have another meaning in relation to wisdom and virtue. MORE IS BETTER refers to wisdom and her gifts (chaps. 8-9). Power will also refer to the authority of the righteous received as the child of God (2:13), i.e. to rule and judge (3:8; 5:1, 15-16; 7:8-10; 8:9-16). On the contrary, the highest value for the wicked in Wis is *more*. The shortness of life, their biggest sorrow (2:1-5), makes them behave and act the way they do. If they cannot make life longer, they find ways to accumulate earthly pleasures (2:6-9; 5:8). MORE IS BETTER goes along with POWER IS BETTER. Even virtue is subordinated to power; thus the meaning of virtue changes: might becomes right (2:11). There seems to be a difference at this point between Wis and John since while the wicked in Wis did not find God (13:1), the unbelievers seems to have found God (John 8:41, 54; 11:52). However, Jesus soon proves them wrong: just like the philosophers in Wis (13:1), the unbelievers in John do not know God (cf. 1:18). They may pretend to know God, but without Jesus they cannot have true knowledge (8:19; 16:2-3).<sup>1470</sup> One cannot simply acquire any

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<sup>1467</sup> See also John 3:33; 4:24; 8:40. Several qualities of God are mentioned in Wis: zeal, righteousness, justice, holiness, and wrath (5:17-20), as well as truth, mercy, love (3:9), temperance, understanding and courage (8:7). God is the owner of the virtues and all human virtues have to be measured against him (8:5-7; cf. 7:15). Truth (3:33), mercy (1:16), love (3:16), wrath (3:36), righteousness (16:8, 10; 5:30) are mentioned in John, too, as the qualities of God or Jesus. We also find the instance that shows Jesus having wisdom (1:48).

<sup>1468</sup> Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, lv, parallels Wis 7:25 and John 8:46; there is no defilement or sin in wisdom and Jesus.

<sup>1469</sup> Cf. Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 375.

<sup>1470</sup> Cory, "Wisdom's Rescue," 101-102, notices the parallel in the relation between the acceptance of revelation and reasoning in Wis and John: "in the Tabernacles discourse, the Johannine Jesus accounts for the Jews' rejection of him as God's revelation by saying that they judge according to appearances (John 7:24; 8:15) and



characteristics or values of God; knowledge, justice and true belief only come through wisdom and Jesus. Thus, at the end, the idea of John about the value system of the believers and unbelievers proves to be very much in line with Wis.<sup>1471</sup> The highest value of the believers, Jesus, is not accepted by the unbelievers.<sup>1472</sup> Their values, therefore, turn out to be deficient or deformed. This leads to a distorted way of life as well. Their highest value may be the law, but without Jesus, they can have neither proper understanding of the law (5:1-17), nor its fulfilment (1:17), since Jesus and wisdom do not only bring law, but they bring glory (John 1:14; 8:50; 11:4; 17:5, 22, 24; Wis 9:11; 7:25-26; 8:10),<sup>1473</sup> grace (John 1:14, 16, 17; Wis 3:9, 14; 4:15),<sup>1474</sup> and truth (John 1:14, 17; 8:31-32, 46; 14:6; Wis 3:9; 6:22; 7:25).<sup>1475</sup> *More* and *power* also get different connotations in relation to Jesus. Contrary to earthly pleasures, life with Jesus becomes *more* that leads to eternal life (12:25), while real power is said to be given from above (19:11). Without Jesus, no one can have true virtue, love, light, power, and life (5:19-47). So even if the wicked in Wis and the unbeliever in John share values similar to those of the righteous/believer, their values are not salvific; the unbelievers end up like the wicked in Wis: they will be judged

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by saying that they belong to the devil, the one who brought death into the world from the beginning (John 8:44). In comparison, the author of the Wisdom of Solomon accounts for wicked people's inaccurate judgment with regard to the destiny of the righteous by saying that it was a consequence of the fact that they had rejected God's revelation. . . . They made a covenant with death, which entered the world by the envy of the devil, and thus they deserve to be in its possession (Wis 1:16; 2:24)."

<sup>1471</sup> Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 23-24: "there are groups whose defining characteristic is that they share certain important values that conflict with those of the mainstream culture." However, Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 24, also note that the other values of these groups are still coherent with the values of the mainstream culture.

<sup>1472</sup> The unbelievers in John are as *blind* as the wicked in Wis 2, but they deny being blind. But as Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 91, says, "only those who know they are blind can receive their sight." Just think of the prayer of Solomon in Wis; man has to realize his limit and ask for light.

<sup>1473</sup> See Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:CXXIII; Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 101-107. Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 107, says that the parallels are even more striking because wisdom is also presented as *μνογενής* earlier in 7:22. See also Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, liv; Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 275, who mention glory related to *μνογενής*.

<sup>1474</sup> See Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, liv; Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 109 n. 3; Harris, *The Origin of the Prologue*, 43.

<sup>1475</sup> See Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 110, 128; Ringe, *Wisdom's Friends*, 51; Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:748. Glicksman, "Beyond Sophia," 90: "Jesus takes the notion of truth to a new level. . . . He does not merely speak the truth, he *is* truth, that is, the truth of God's salvation." Glicksman, "Beyond Sophia," 90-91, also argues that this is true of *life* as well.

and they perish (Wis 4:19-5:23; John 5:29; 12:48<sup>1476</sup>). All values get their proper content in relation to wisdom and Jesus, and only then they lead to immortality and eternal life.

#### 4.1.3.3 *Alive in Terms of Orientation Up*

Several sections proved up to now that Wis and John agree in the way they think of immortality and eternal life; this small discussion shows another clear parallel. Both texts link the concepts of eternity and eternal life to the realm of God. The righteous/believer being the child of God becomes part of the family of God (Wis 5:5; John 1:12-13), God's friend (Wis 7:14, 27; John 15:13-15), and lives forever (Wis 5:15; John 10:28-29). The following metaphor visualizes this idea via an orientational metaphor. Since God and his realm is *up* (Wis 9:10, 17; 10:10; John 1:51; 3:3, 5, 31) and eternity is linked to God (Wis 2:23; 7:26; John 1:1; 5:26; 6:57),<sup>1477</sup> the eternal life of human beings is linked to being part of the realm of God (Wis 5:15; John 12:32). Therefore the eternal life of the righteous/believer can be conceived as ALIVE IS UP. Wis 4:10, 11, 14 and John 14:2-4 shows death as departure towards the final location, God's kingdom or the Father's home.<sup>1478</sup> The texts view this departure of the righteous and the believer as ascent.

Drawing a parallel between the departure of the righteous and that of Jesus presents further similarities. The righteous was taken up by God (Wis 4:10, 11,<sup>1479</sup> 14), while Jesus was lifted up so that those who believe in him receive eternal life (John 3:14-15). Both texts look at physical

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<sup>1476</sup> Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 362, about ὁ λόγος . . . κρινεῖ αὐτὸν in John 12:48: "There seems to be no precise parallel to this statement." Barrett (362), however, links it with John 7:51 (ὁ νόμος ἡμῶν κρίνει), which "may point to the origin of the present saying. It goes without saying that, in Jewish thought, judgement was according to the Law; and sometimes the Law seems to take a more active and personal part in the process of judging. See 2 Bar. 48.47 . . . At Wisd. 9.4, Wisdom (often equated with the Law) is described as τὴν τῶν σῶν θρόνων πάρεδρον, which seems to mean that Wisdom is an assessor with God in judgement. . . . Thus, though John's phrase may well be a development of a synoptic expression such as Mark 8.38 . . . yet it may also be true that the development took place under the influence of a tendency to view the words of Jesus as a new Law."

<sup>1477</sup> Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, lv, and Witherington, *John's Wisdom*, 157, draw a parallel between John 5:26 and Wis 7:27.

<sup>1478</sup> See also Wis 3:1-9; John 12:26; 14:2-4.

<sup>1479</sup> Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, lvi, parallels Wis 4:10, 11 with John 17:15 (My prayer is not that you take them out of the world). However, since Wis text shows that God protects the righteous by taking them away; therefore a better parallel may be Jesus' lifting up in the sense it is explained above.

death in this context as exaltation.<sup>1480</sup> The righteous is made king and judge over people (Wis 3:8; 5:16). Jesus will be glorified and take his place next to the Father (14:28; 17:1-22). The texts also emphasize God's saving presence among people; it is God's salvific act that is carried out in the moment of the death of the righteous and Jesus (Wis 3:1-9; 4:10, 11, 14; John 3:14-15; 8:28). The single difference we find within this thought structure is shown by the sentences that speak about Jesus laying down his life for his people (John 10:11ff; 15:12-13; 3:14-15; 8:28; 12:32). Although Wis also uses the language of sacrifice in 3:6, the idea of vicarious suffering is missing in Wis.<sup>1481</sup> Jesus dies for the sake of others, so that they also belong where he belongs, the Father's house (3:14-15; 12:32; 14:2-3). The righteous' suffering is to please God, be faithful to him (4:10).<sup>1482</sup>

A final note on the metaphor: both texts emphasize that although the final and definitive departure towards God's realm where life happens after death, the righteous and the believer already experience the life of God as the children of God. Thus spiritually they are already up (Wis 2:13, 16, 18; John 15:19; 17:14, 16), and because being up is being alive, they are already living (Wis 2:13-16; John 5:24). This life extends to their future as an existence that has no end (Wis 5:15; John 3:15; 14:3, 19). So we can conclude that the metaphorical construction that views immortality and eternal life in terms of upward orientation is an essential element of the eschatology of Wis and John.

## 4.2 The Concepts of Immortality and Eternal life

Up to now I compared the cosmology of Wis and John to see how they imagine the cosmos and its different realities, how they structure and relate them, and what aspects they consider important with regards to immortality and eternal life. We can say that the comparison revealed a huge overlapping in thoughts and images. Although we can grasp some differences as well, Wis

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<sup>1480</sup> Cory, "Wisdom's Rescue," 111-112, also notices that John also places Jesus' vindication in the moment of death, similarly to what we see in Wis 1:16-5:23.

<sup>1481</sup> Friendship as it is presented in Jewish literature does not require the idea of giving one's life for the other or else, it speaks about it in the context of the nation. See Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2:682; Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 2:1004; Borchert, *John*, 148; Josephus, *1 J.W.* 43-45.

<sup>1482</sup> In spite of this difference, John 9 also rejects the idea that earthly suffering is the consequence of sin just as the account of the barren woman, the eunuch and the righteous that dies young in Wis 3-4 speaks against suffering as the sign of punishment of God.

and John share similar view about God, the world, human life, the opposition between evil and God, the relation between human beings and God, and the world as the place of decision. From each of these conceptions we could grasp something about the way immortality and eternal life are perceived and also understand how these concepts interweave with the view on human life.

The second part of the comparison will now deal with metaphors that make us understand the concepts of immortality and eternal life more deeply; we consider them essential in our cognition. They show different aspects of immortality and eternal life and strengthen the idea that immortality and eternal life are relational concepts. Interestingly, but not surprisingly—given the number of parallels we saw up to now—we basically find the same metaphors related to immortality and eternal life in Wis and John. Perhaps the most essential idea that runs through the texts is that immortality and eternal life is presence with God. The other metaphors either qualify and extend this state or let us perceive the relation between human beings and eternal life, communion with God and eternal life more deeply. Immortality and eternal life is, thus, seen as the gift of God, but also a quality of the righteous and the believer. It is seen as the result, but also the condition of the communion with God, the state but also the purpose of man. It is viewed as a state that is described by the metaphors being in the hand of God, being in love, at peace, being the child of God, as well as in terms of light, knowledge, power to judge.

#### 4.2.1 Immortality and Eternal Life as Presence with God

##### 4.2.1.1 *Presence and Destination as Two Aspects of Immortality and Eternal Life*

Immortality and eternal life have present and future aspects. On the one hand, the righteous/believer already take part in God's life (Wis 2:13-16; John 1:12-13). Immortality and eternal life is in this case conceived as presence.<sup>1483</sup> The metaphor LIFE IS PRESENCE understands immortality and eternal life as a state the righteous/believer are already in (Wis 2:23; John 5:24).<sup>1484</sup> The righteous/believer share the life of God being present in the realm of God. This

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<sup>1483</sup> See Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 48, 59.

<sup>1484</sup> Reflecting on John 11:26, Coloe, *Dwelling in the Household of God*, 86-87, says: "This quality of life is a present reality made possible by faith in Jesus who is, in his own person, the creative power of God. This is the understanding of life for the righteous that is found in the book of Wisdom. For the righteous, death has no final reality: 'they only appear to die' (Wis 3:2)." Coloe seems to be inclined to see the death of the

state is, however, not the natural quality of man, but it is linked to realm of God, and it is received as the gift of God by man (Wis 8:13; 16:20-26; 19:21; John 1:3-4; 4:14;<sup>1485</sup> 6:27; 10:18).<sup>1486</sup>

Both Wis and John extend the idea of gift by the metaphors of bread<sup>1487</sup> and water,<sup>1488</sup> both of which point to salvation. It is wisdom and Jesus that provide the bread that makes people live forever.<sup>1489</sup> The manna of the Exodus account in Wis is associated with wisdom and eternity (16:20-26; 19:21).<sup>1490</sup> Jesus also gives bread that will not perish (6:27). In both cases manna that wisdom gives and the bread Jesus gives stand in opposition to everyday bread: they assure eternal life, thus having eschatological meaning. Moreover, bread is used as a metaphor for both wisdom (16:20, 26) and Jesus (6:35, 48).<sup>1491</sup> There is a most interesting parallel that we get in Wis 16 and John 3:14; although these verses do not speak of bread, the context of Wis verse clarifies why we mention it here. As the serpent saves people in the Exodus, so does Jesus at the cross.<sup>1492</sup> Wis calls the serpent σύμβολον σωτηρίας in 16:6, which “signified the means through

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righteous in Wis only seeming death (*Dwelling in the Household of God*, 70): “Life, properly understood, is more than mere existence, but is communion with God enjoyed by the just (4:10-14), and physical death neither destroys nor interrupts this. In fact, for the righteous physical demise is not really death, since they only ‘seem to die’ (Wis 3:2).” Coloe is right in arguing that death does not destroy nor interrupts the communion of life with God; however, we do not agree with the second part of her argument, since death is clearly stated as a physical reality in Wis 3:6 and elsewhere (see the discussion on Wis); the physical life of the righteous and the wicked ends there.

<sup>1485</sup> Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:431 n. 37, notes that ἄλλομαι, the welling up (of water) in John 4:14 is used as a metaphor of the Spirit of God in Judg 14:6, 19; 15:14; 1 Sam 10:10 (LXX) and of the word of God in Wis 18:15. Thompson, *The God of the Gospel of John*, 148, observes that “the Spirit, described on analogy with ‘water,’ is conceived of virtually as a substance poured out upon believers.” He notes (148 n. 9) that Wis 7:22-23 also contains elements that show wisdom conceived as a substance.

<sup>1486</sup> See Murphy, *The Tree of Life*, 86.

<sup>1487</sup> Similarly to wisdom, Jesus provides bread that is more than daily bread, and also more than the manna of Exodus.

<sup>1488</sup> The paralleling idea of life as gift in John and Wis is noted by Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 123-124; Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 131.

<sup>1489</sup> For the “I am sayings” parallels in wisdom literature, see Witherington, *John's Wisdom*, 157-158; Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 118-129.

<sup>1490</sup> See Beauchamp, “Le salut,” 508-509; Gilbert, “The Origins,” 182.

<sup>1491</sup> Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 376, observing the parallel between Wis 16:20-26 and John 6, remarks: “In both cases the wonder is seen to point to a larger verity outside itself,” i.e. God and eternal life.

<sup>1492</sup> Many scholars consider Wis 16:5-14 a probable background for John 3:14 (for a contrary opinion see Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:395 n. 134); the lifting up of Jesus parallels the lifting up of the serpent in Wis 16:6 that is called σύμβολον σωτηρίας. Ziener, “Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium,” 411, discussed this earlier, and he also makes the link with the word in Wis 16:12. Among other scholars that

which men passed from death to life.”<sup>1493</sup> This is what the cross also signifies in John, the means of salvation. If we add to this what Wis 16:12 says—an idea also repeated in 16:26—, “for neither herb nor poultice cured them, but it was your word, O Lord, that heals all people,” the allusion is complete with the bread of life whose words save humankind from death (John 6:63).<sup>1494</sup> Water is associated with wisdom and immortality in 11:4,<sup>1495</sup> just as it is associated with Jesus and eternal life in John 4:14.<sup>1496</sup>

Despite the similarities mentioned above, the nuances in Wis seem slightly different with regards to LIFE AS PRESENCE when we read Wis 2:23 that God created man *in immortality*. The drawback of this claim is that it seems to argue for the original immortality of man. It has, nevertheless, been shown that immortality was never inherent quality of man; it was always received in relation to wisdom. Thus, even when Wis speaks about the creation of man in immortality, we have to understand immortality as the quality of man’s communion with wisdom. From the very beginning wisdom was present in the world (8:1); she linked all human beings to God (10:1).

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notice the parallel are Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 178; Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 306; Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 378. Barnabas Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic: The Doctrinal Significance of the Old Testament Quotations* (London: SCM, 1961), 236: “John is the first Christian writer to make use of the brazen serpent of Num. 21.9 as a type of the saving cross. In the Septuagint of this verse the standard on which the serpent was hung is translated by the word σημεῖον. . . . In Wisd. 16.6 we can see how an Alexandrian writer can take advantage of the Septuagint rendering to interpret it symbolically, and so he calls it σύμβολον σωτηρίας. John stands in line with this tradition. In 3.14 he sees the ‘symbol’ fulfilled in the cross of Christ. He evidently found it so useful to express the glory of the cross that the lifting up of the Son of Man becomes a technical expression. So it recurs in 8.28 and 12.32, and is referred to in 18.32.” Popp, in *Kontexte*, 570, mentions the similarity in style, literary build-up and thought in Wis 16:5-14 and John 2:23-3:36; the *Kontexte* refers to Hans Maneschg, *Die Erzählung von der ehernen Schlange (Num 21, 4-9) in der Auslegung der frühen jüdischen Literatur: Eine traditionsgeschichtliche Studie*, EHS.T 23/157 (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1981), 111-174, also 434-437.

<sup>1493</sup> Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 306; cf. Passaro, “The Serpent and the Manna,” 190-191.

<sup>1494</sup> Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, lv, and Ziener, “Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium,” 47-48, noted the parallel. Coloe, *Dwelling in the Household of God*, 80: “In the book of Wisdom salvation came not in some magical way by simply looking at the bronze serpent, but through the agency of Wisdom, called here ‘the Savior of all.’ . . . The serpent narrative, told through the lens of Wisdom, provides the most likely background for the theme of salvation introduced in the Nicodemus passage and rarely used in the Fourth Gospel.” And he goes on (80): “Against the background of the book of Wisdom, Jesus speaks of a Spirit-generated birth through which a believer enters into not simply ordinary, mortal life, but a quality of heavenly or eternity life.”

<sup>1495</sup> See McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 182-186.

<sup>1496</sup> See van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 231-233; Beasley-Murray, *John*, 60; Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 192-195; Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:427-428.

Immortality, therefore, never becomes a natural condition of man in Wis, but it always remains the gift of God through his wisdom (1:1, 15; 6:17-21).

The other aspect of immortality and eternal life is the future fulfilment. The metaphors LIFE IS A JOURNEY and DEATH IS DEPARTURE TO A FINAL DESTINATION view immortality and eternal life as the destination of the traveller (Wis 11:1-2ff; cf. 5:7; John 11:9-10; 12:35).<sup>1497</sup> Via these metaphors we understand immortality and eternal life as goals that one has to reach or strive for (Wis 11:1-2ff; 4:10, 14; John 14:2-3, 6). Immortality and eternal life do not appear as states but as rewards for a blameless life and belief (Wis 2:22; 3:13-15; John 3:3, 5; 12:25-26; 13:4-17) that can only be reached through wisdom (5:6; 9:11, 17-18; 14:6; 18:3) and Jesus (10:9).<sup>1498</sup> The final destination of the righteous and the believer is the realm of God (Wis 4:10, 11, 14; John 14:2-3).

The metaphor LIFE IS PRESENCE and LIFE IS A JOURNEY show two distinct but coherent aspects of immortality and eternal life. If we wanted to formulate the difference between immortality and life as presence and destination, we could say that eternal life as presence is viewed from the point of view of God who created and ordered all for life (Wis 2:23; John 1:3), whereas eternal life as a purpose is the perspective of human beings that experience sharing in immortality and eternal life as reaching their destination on the journey of life.

#### 4.2.1.2 *The Communion of Life*

Although all the metaphors emphasize the relational aspect of the concepts of immortality and eternal life, I took time to look at the special communion the righteous and the believer has with God, wisdom or Jesus. This communion is a key concept in the soteriology of Wis and John, an aspect of eternal life.<sup>1499</sup>

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<sup>1497</sup> See also the discussion on mortality.

<sup>1498</sup> Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 122: "The idea of Jesus as 'door' has to do with access—access to knowledge, life, and ultimately God's salvation (10.9)." Thus, although there is no reference to wisdom as the door, as Scott (*Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 122) says, she "nevertheless fulfills the same *function* . . . She is effectively the door to God and salvation" (cf. Wis 10-19).

<sup>1499</sup> See Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 47.

The basis of the believer's/righteous' communion with God is the communion between wisdom/Jesus and God (Wis 8:3; 9:4, 9; John 1:1, 18; 14:10-11, 20). We can see wisdom pictured at the throne of God (9:4a) and Jesus near God (1:1, 18).<sup>1500</sup> This communion becomes present in the union of man with wisdom and Jesus. Several images depict man's union with wisdom and Jesus. One of the images is wisdom sitting at the gate of the righteous (6:14b), and Jesus dwelling among people (1:14).<sup>1501</sup> Although the texts use different images here, we are not only able to perceive the relationship between man and wisdom or Jesus, but also see the idea that wisdom and Jesus approach man so that he can share the life of God: wisdom brings man close to God (7:27c), just as Jesus does (17:20-23).

The presentation of man's communion with wisdom evolves into a picture of marital relationship when wisdom is called *bride* that shares household with man (8:2, 9; 7:10). The same is said of wisdom's relationship to God (8:3). Thus, again we can perceive that man's union with wisdom is modelled upon the union between God and wisdom. Although the relationship between Jesus and God is expressed in other terms—father and son—the union of Jesus and the believers is also expressed in terms of marital relationship. Jesus is called *the bridegroom* in 3:29.<sup>1502</sup> The marital metaphor emphasizes the aspects of love, commitment and mutuality in the relationship between man and wisdom/Jesus.

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<sup>1500</sup> The parallel regarding the communion between wisdom/Logos and God was noticed by Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 274; Ringe, *Wisdom's Friends*, 49; Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 96; Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, liv. There is dispute over the issue whether "pros + Acc" in John 1:1b is equivalent to "meta + Gen" in Sir 1:1 and Wis 9:9. The dictionaries allow that both expressions can mean "in company of/with"; see "πρὸς," and "μετά," BDAG, ad loc.; "πρὸς," and "μετά," UBS, ad loc. Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 96-97, says that the expressions are in "precise correspondence" notwithstanding the difference in language. Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:234, however, claims a difference: "Wisdom (Sophia, *hokmāh*) is pictured as God's companion and partner in the creation of all things, but the Logos is really there before creation, in personal fellowship with God, living in God and from God. The active partnership is also a personal union, and the proximity also implies reciprocal indwelling (cf. 14:11 f., 20 etc.)." For this latter opinion, see also Glicksman, "Beyond Sophia," 86.

<sup>1501</sup> For other references, see Wis 6:12-15; 7:10, 14, 27-28; 8:2-18; John 14:20; 15:4-5, 7; 17:21-23, 26.

<sup>1502</sup> Sjeff van Tilborg, *Imaginative Love in John*, Biblnt 2 (Leiden: Brill, 1993), 76, explains the bridegroom metaphor in John as "mythical language which refers to God's marriage with Israel (in Hos 1-2; Is 61,10; Jer 2,2)." My opinion is that the imagery may probably be as well interpreted against Solomon's marriage with wisdom.



Perhaps the strongest images of unity are Wis 7:24, 27c and John 14:20, 23; 15:1-7;<sup>1503</sup> 17:21-23, 26 that present the relationship between wisdom/Jesus and the righteous/believer in terms of being in each other.<sup>1504</sup> Wisdom enters the righteous and Jesus abides in the believer. Via this metaphorical construction the righteous and the believer are seen as containers in which wisdom and Jesus are present. Via the GREAT CHAIN METAPHOR<sup>1505</sup> we could understand what the terms entering and abiding refer to. Human beings are understood in terms of complex objects. As a result, their characteristics and behaviour are viewed as structural attributes and functional behaviour. Thus, the unity of man with wisdom and Jesus viewed in terms of being in each other perceives the structural unity of this relationship, as well as its functional aspect. Wisdom works with God in creation and ordering the creation (7:15, 26; 9:1-2), and man functions with wisdom (9:9-10).<sup>1506</sup> Similarly, Jesus works with God (5:19; 8:28-29), and man works with Jesus (12:25-26; 13:12-17; 14:23-24; 15:11).<sup>1507</sup> John uses an even more complex form of this metaphor by depicting a threefold union between the believers, Jesus and God: the believers abide in Jesus, who abides in God; therefore, the believers also abide in God (14:20; 17:21). Although the idea is put in different words, it is clearly present in Wis as well: wisdom is in communion with God (8:3; 9:4, 9-10, 17) and enters in communion with people (7:7ff; 8:9ff; 9:4ff), so that they can be in communion with God (7:13, 27).

Our short comparison hopefully revealed that in the perception of Wis and John the righteous and the believer are linked to God similarly to the union between God and wisdom/Jesus. The implication of this is that the union with God can be achieved only through union with wisdom and Jesus. Further, the communion of man with wisdom and Jesus leads to a new existence that enables the righteous and the believer to live with God. By being related to wisdom or Jesus in

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<sup>1503</sup> Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 158: John 15:1-7 and Wis 7:27 is the best “functional parallel” since they share similar elements: “Sophia, who abides in herself, which in the context of Wis. 7.22-26 clearly means she abides in God, is involved in a recreative work (like the ‘pruning’ of the vinekeeper), by entering into the lives of the disciples and making them friends of God (= Jn 15.14).”

<sup>1504</sup> Brown, *Introduction*, 263, also compares wisdom penetrating people (Wis 7:24, 27) with John 14:23. Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 378: “John’s theology of the penetration of believers by Christ, so that he will dwell in them (14:23) seems to echo the idea found in Wis. 7:24, 27 that salvation amounts to Wisdom penetrating and indwelling human beings.”

<sup>1505</sup> See it described in Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 160-213; Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 121-134.

<sup>1506</sup> Cf. Bennema, *The Power of Saving Wisdom*, 66.

<sup>1507</sup> See van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 210.

the way wisdom and Jesus is related to God, man shares the life of God. He also gets the qualities of that relationship: he will abide in love, peace, knowledge, power and light.

#### 4.2.1.3 *Abiding in Love*

At the basis of salvation in Wis and John there lies the idea that the Creator loves what he created (Wis 11:24-26; John 3:16).<sup>1508</sup> In the context of creation, the concept of love, thus, expresses the attitude and actions of the saviour God, just as it reveals the salvific relation between God, Jesus/wisdom and man.

The metaphor of love once more lets us perceive the union of man, wisdom/Jesus and God in its structure. God loves wisdom and Jesus (Wis 8:3; John 17:22-24). Glicksman notes that no other piece of Jewish wisdom literature, except for Wis 8:3, “explicitly proclaims God’s love for Sophia.”<sup>1509</sup> Jesus also loves God (14:31). Implicitly we can find this idea in Wis as well: wisdom lives with God (8:3).<sup>1510</sup> The righteous/believer reciprocates this love, and he who loves wisdom and Jesus (Wis 1:1, 5; 6:12; 7:10; 8:2; John 14:21, 23; 16:27)<sup>1511</sup> will be loved by God (Wis 4:10, 14; 7:28; <sup>1512</sup> John 14:21, 23; 16:27).<sup>1513</sup> He enters the union of love between wisdom/Jesus and God. John expresses this beautifully in 17:26: “the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.” This is the same dynamics we can grasp in the other metaphors of abiding; it presupposes openness towards each other and mutuality (Wis 4:10; John 14:21, 23; 16:27). Although God as Creator loves all human beings, the realization of love happens only in this reciprocal openness between God and human beings. Perhaps the strongest point of comparison is that both texts link love and revelation. Barrett comments on John 14:21:

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<sup>1508</sup> See Beasley-Murray, *John*, 51; See also McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 130-131. Love of humanity is also behind the actions of Jesus and wisdom, although this latter never exhibits the sacrificial love of Jesus and that of the disciples (John 10:11, 15, 17, 18; 13:10-17).

<sup>1509</sup> Glicksman, “Beyond Sophia,” 95.

<sup>1510</sup> Glicksman, “Beyond Sophia,” 95, notes that wisdom is nowhere said to love God. He also raises the question (“Beyond Sophia,” 96), reflecting on the suggestion of Willett (*Wisdom Christology in the Fourth Gospel*, 79) that this may be because wisdom is not a person, that “if this is the case, then how does one explain Sophia’s love for her followers?”

<sup>1511</sup> Another expression of man’s proper attitude towards wisdom and Jesus is honour (Wis 6:21; John 5:23). Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, lv, noted the parallel.

<sup>1512</sup> Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, lvi, also notes the parallel between John 16:27 (cf. 14:6b) and Wis 7:28, while Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 200, parallels Wis 7:28 with John 11:5.

<sup>1513</sup> See Glicksman, “Beyond Sophia,” 96-97.

“The love of Christ for his disciple is declared in self-manifestation. Ἐμφανίζειν is used again in the next verse; nowhere else in John, and nowhere else in the New Testament in this sense. It is an appropriate word since it is used of theophanies . . . Wisd. 1.2, [The Lord] ἐμφανίζεται δὲ τοῖς μὴ ἀπιστοῦσιν αὐτῷ.”<sup>1514</sup> Wis 1:2 says that God reveals (ἐμφανίζειν) himself to those who trust him, while in Wis 6:12-16 we can see the self-revelation of wisdom.<sup>1515</sup> The aforementioned texts also underline that the love and revelation of God implies mutuality. Without man’s answer to God’s love in Jesus and wisdom no relation is formed between man and God, and man cannot take part in the life of God. So the metaphor of love in Wis and John is yet another instance of the relational aspect of immortality and eternal life. Only man that abides in the love of God, will live forever (Wis 1:1, 15; John 3:16).

The metaphor of abiding in love expresses the realization of the love-relation between God and human beings; it is yet another way of perceiving life with God. LIFE IS PRESENCE WITH GOD is extended by presence in the love of God. The righteous is said to *remain in love* (Wis 3:9c).<sup>1516</sup> The believer *abides in love* (John 15:9-10). These two expressions perceive immortality and eternal life as a continuous state in the love of God. The other aspect of the metaphor is functional; it underlines the ethical feature of life with God: openness and goodness in behaviour and actions. Man has to open his heart towards God (Wis 1:1-2; John 1:12) and do what is right (Wis 6:17b-18a; John 12:25-26). This involves actions towards God (Wis 6:17b-18a; 2:12-16; John 14:21), but towards fellow human beings as well (Wis 9:7-12; cf. 6:4; John 15:12; 13:4-17).

#### 4.2.1.4 The General Idea of Life as the Cause of Individual Life

Mortality imposes limitedness on human beings in all their interactions with the divine. This limitedness is dissolved when man receives eternal life through wisdom and Jesus (Wis 6:19; John 3:3, 5); from that moment on, he will be able to unite with God. Immortality and eternal life, thus, can be viewed as the conditions of being with God.<sup>1517</sup> This—that there is a phenomenon called immortality or eternal life that leads us to God—and the perception that

<sup>1514</sup> Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 388.

<sup>1515</sup> Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, lvi, had earlier paralleled John 14:21 with Wis 6:16.

<sup>1516</sup> The idea is expressed with negatively in Wis 1:4: wisdom does not dwell in the wicked. Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 157, makes a link between John 14:21 and Sir 4:14 and Wis 1:4.

<sup>1517</sup> See Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 66; van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 178.

presence with God is used as a metaphor for immortality and eternal life (Wis 5:15; John 10:28-29) leads us to see a metaphorical structuring where there is a distinction made between the general concept of life and the individual concept of life. It is because there is a general phenomenon of immortality and life (related to God) that human beings can hope for immortality and eternal life.

The idea appears explicitly in Wis 6:19 where immortality is personified: immortality appears as an agent that makes one able to be with God. And since being close to God is equated to immortality (5:5, 15-16; 3:1-9), the verses, thus, paraphrase the idea that immortality as God's gift leads to the life of human beings. In other words, there is a general phenomenon of immortality that makes possible to think of individual immortality.<sup>1518</sup>

The personification presupposed by the EVENTS ARE ACTIONS metaphor<sup>1519</sup> is not explicit in John. We do not see eternal life as an agent. However, the idea may be implicitly implied by the text. Jesus is called the light of life in 8:12. Many of the properties of light are mapped into life, but the property that leads us to the understanding of eternal life as leading to individual life is that light promotes growth. If this property of light is mapped into life, we can see life (general) as promoting life (individual). The other instance of this metaphor may be 14:19: Jesus says to the disciples that because he lives, they will also live. The underlying thought is that it is because eternal life exists that those that follow Jesus will also live (see also 12:25).

The conception of life this way is strengthened by a similar conception of its antithesis, death. Wis 1:16 and 2:24 describe death as a person that takes away the wicked from God, and because there is no life apart from God, they die. Thus, individual death is viewed as caused by the general phenomenon of death. John 12:25 likewise conceives death as a phenomenon that steals individual life.<sup>1520</sup> The parallel structuring of life and death in this way emphasizes the idea that immortality and life implies presence with God and individual life, while death implies the loss

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<sup>1518</sup> Via the metaphor EVENTS ARE ACTIONS we can understand this personification: immortality that is the event of reaching everlasting existence is viewed as an action of an agent. See Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 72-80; Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 49-50, for the EVENTS ARE ACTIONS metaphor.

<sup>1519</sup> We discussed the concept earlier in the discussion about Wis and John. For the metaphor, see Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 72-80.

<sup>1520</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 324, notes that sin is personified in John 8:34.

of communion with God and individual death. Immortality and eternal life are viewed as the cause and condition of being with God. This is another aspect of these concepts, which combines with the one that perceives immortality and eternal life as the quality of the life with God. These two aspects are coherent. We should not forget that these metaphorical constructions are about human cognition, how human beings understand “heavenly things” (John 3:12). So if life is understood both as condition/cause and result, that is because it has several aspects. On the one hand, immortality and eternal life are the qualities of the life of God; those that are with God, share this quality—this is a result, which emphasizes the gift that we can receive in communion with God.<sup>1521</sup> On the other hand, human beings are limited in their nature and relations; they cannot relate to the divine without having the qualities of the divine—this is a condition, which underlines the idea of human limitedness that awaits the mercy and love of God.

#### 4.2.1.5 *Being in the Hand of God*

Another metaphorical structuring of immortality and eternal life is LIFE IS PRESENCE IN THE HAND OF GOD. In Wis 3:1 we read that “the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them.” The context in Wis 3:1 clearly implies the physical death of the righteous (2:12-20); thus the metaphor being in the hand of God refers to the state of the righteous after death. The subsequent verses underline this context (3:2-9); they imply that at the moment of death God protected the righteous. The righteous that was seen dying is in fact in God’s hand, at peace, in love. So this metaphorical structuring that describes the righteous being present in the hand of God defines one aspect of immortality. The link with 2:23<sup>1522</sup> lets us perceive that being in the hand of God is, indeed, a metaphor for immortality that was purposed for all human beings at the creation. In John 10:28 we have Jesus say: “I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand.” Here the text itself clearly connects life and the state of being in the hand of God.

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<sup>1521</sup> The reaction of the wicked and unbelievers can be seen in Wis 2:12 and John 7:7: they hate Jesus and the righteous for they testify against them. The parallel is mentioned by Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, lv.

<sup>1522</sup> 3:1 is part of the author’s reply to the reasoning of the wicked (2:1-20), which started in 2:20. The creation of man in eternity (2:23) is, thus, linked to his final state in the hand of God (3:1).

The metaphor uses the already discussed conception that views immortality and eternal life as a state of presence with God; this state is then extended by the hand of God concept. Thus the metaphorical perception of immortality and eternal life is LIFE IS BEING IN THE HAND OF GOD. The hand of God is a well-known metaphor in the OT; it describes God's power in giving life, saving and judging.<sup>1523</sup> It is another instance of the Great Chain Metaphor: God's power is perceived in terms of human body. Source and target domain is both perceived in the expression ἐν χειρὶ θεοῦ; the metaphor uses the qualities and functions of human hand to understand and discuss God's power. Accordingly, the function of expressing physical power would refer to God's power to rule (Wis 7:16; 10:20; John 14:30; 16:33; 17:2; 19:11), the function of keeping something to God's power to protect and save (Wis 3:1; 5:16; 10:20; 14:6; 19:8; John 5:21; 17:2), and the function of releasing something to God's power to judge and punish (Wis 10:19-20; 16:15; John 5:22, 27; 9:39).

Since the hand of God metaphor is combined with LIFE IS BEING PRESENT WITH GOD, the metaphorical structuring refers to eternal life that is viewed as a state in the hand of God. LIFE IS BEING IN THE HAND OF GOD, therefore, again underlines the relational aspect of immortality and eternal life. Those who are in the hand of God are in unity with God (Wis 5:16; 6:19-20; John 12:25-26; 17:11). This implies that all these qualities and functions are shared by the righteous as the qualities of his state of being in the hand of God. If we look at protection as the property of being in the hand of God, we can see that this refers to protection from eternal death. The righteous/believer is in communion with God throughout his whole life. This protection does not only cover the righteous' earthly life (Wis 2:13, 16, 18; John chap. 17), but it extends to the moment of death (Wis 4:11; John 3:14; 8:28; 12:32, 34) and even the period after death (Wis 3:1ff; 5:16; John 13:36; 14:2-3, 23). Being in the hand of God is, thus, a permanent state of the righteous/believer implying the surety of immortality and eternal life. The righteous present in God's hand enjoys the qualities of this state even after death (Wis 3:1; 5:16). John echoes the same idea with reference to the believer that remains in the Father's hand forever (John 10:28-29). The term John uses for snatching out is ἀρπάζω (take by force, snatch, catch up, take away), the same term Wis 4:11 uses to express that God took the righteous up. The two texts together

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<sup>1523</sup> See "χείρ," *BDAG*, ad loc.; Mulzac, *EDB*, 548.

emphasize God's power: "no one can snatch" the believer out of God's hand but he can any time take away the righteous from the middle of perversion. An interesting instance is 10:39 where Jesus escapes from the hands of those who want to arrest him. It echoes the righteous' escape from the hands of the adversaries because he is in the hand of God (cf. Wis 2:18 and 3:1).

The idea of functional unity between the righteous/believer and God is also perceived by LIFE IS PRESENCE IN THE HAND OF GOD. As a consequence of this metaphorical structuring, the righteous and the believer are not only protected, but they will have ruling and judging functions. Wis 3:8 views the unity between the elevated righteous and God in terms of reigning. Here the basis of the kingship of man is the idea that God created man "in the image of his own eternity" (Wis 2:23); man is purposed to rule over creation in righteousness (Wis 9:2-3). The kingship of man is accomplished in the Kingdom of God in Wis where the righteous will rule over and judge the wicked (Wis 3:8; 4:16-18a; 5:1ff; 5:15-16). The idea is that those who will rule and judge, will not be judged (Wis 5:1-5). Functional unity between Jesus, God and the believers is perceived in John 10:28-29. Here the family metaphor provides the basis for the unity.<sup>1524</sup> 3:35 (also 13:3) says that God "had given all things into his hands": Jesus is invested with power to protect (17:12), save (5:21; 17:2), rule (14:30; 16:33; 17:2), judge and punish (5:22, 27; 9:39).<sup>1525</sup> Contrary to Wis, John does not project the rule of the believers. Nevertheless, there are elements of the kingship metaphor that are implied. God gives authority to his children (1:12); this means that the believers have right to act according to their status as the children of God the King (19:11; 12:31; 14:30). Jesus also gives authority to the disciples to judge (20:23). Although this does not refer to an eschatological judgment, the disciples are given power to help others, "mediating God's forgiveness through the word they bring"<sup>1526</sup>—in this distinguishing between good and evil is implicitly included. But as we have seen, this element of the metaphor LIFE IS PRESENCE IN THE HAND OF GOD is given less space in John than in Wis where the concept of man's kingship interweaves with the ideas of creation and order.

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<sup>1524</sup> Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, 240-241.

<sup>1525</sup> Cory, "Wisdom's Rescue," 112-113, grasps another similarity between the vindication of the righteous in Wis and that of Jesus, namely, "a dramatic reversal of roles, a reversal in which the accused has now become the accuser and judge of his enemies."

<sup>1526</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 2:1207. See also Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2:1044.

#### 4.2.1.6 Being at Peace

The concept of peace is related to wisdom and Jesus. In John Jesus gives peace to the disciples several times (14:27; 16:33; 20:19, 21, 26).<sup>1527</sup> We can deduce that peace characterizes the communion with God, life with God. The metaphor LIFE IS PRESENCE WITH GOD is then extended by the concept of peace, defining life with God as peace.

Noteworthy is Wis 3:3b that says that the righteous who live with wisdom (8:16) εἰσιν ἐν εἰρήνῃ, while the context recounts the death of the righteous (2:12-20); as a consequence, peace at first appears to qualify physical death.<sup>1528</sup> However, a close examination of the context reveals that 3:3b is part of the author's argumentation started in 2:12 that refutes the wrong view of the wicked on life and death. Verse 3:3b, thus, describes the real fate of the righteous: the righteous does not die; notwithstanding physical death, he goes on living. He will be in peace and in the hope of immortality (3:4). This aspect of immortality is defined by the concept of peace, namely, that life continues through physical death in communion with God.<sup>1529</sup> Peace, then, is the quality of the communion with God, and thus of immortality that is defined as life with God.

Wis 3:3b reveals that peace is mentioned in the context of a crisis situation. The righteous is said to be at peace (3:1) in the face of a terrible death (2:19-20). Whenever Jesus gives peace to the disciples, their fear turns into joy (16:20-33; 20:19, 21, 26). Peace, thus, expresses the moment when the crisis is reversed (John 16:33a; 20:19, 21, 26). John 16:21 and 17:3 link peace to joy, while Wis 8:16 describes life with wisdom in terms of joy. The act of giving peace, therefore, reflects on the saving power of God that reverses the situation and rescues the righteous/believer by giving him eternal life.

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<sup>1527</sup> Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, lvi, parallels John 14:27 with Wis 14:22; Wis 14:22 is, however, about worldly peace that Jesus rejects. I find Wis 3:3 a better parallel.

<sup>1528</sup> Coloe, *Dwelling in the Household of God*, 85, parallels, among others, Wis 17:14 [17:13 LXX] and John 11:11 since both of them associate death with sleep. She mentions (*Dwelling in the Household of God*, 85) that this association is a late development; it "is more common within the post-exilic and Wisdom writings, possibly reflecting the developing notion that death is not an end, but that there will be a time when the 'sleeper' will awaken." However, we have to note that the Wis text seems to speak about ultimate death; the context relates the sleep of the wicked to Hades, darkness and fear.

<sup>1529</sup> Similar structuring of immortality we see in ἐν ἀναπαύσει (Wis 4:7).



#### 4.2.1.7 Immortality and Life in Terms of Light

God is called eternal light (Wis 7:26; 1 John 1:5). As mediators of the light of God (Wis 6:12; 7:10c, 26, 29-30; John 1:4-9; 8:12; 12:46),<sup>1530</sup> wisdom and Jesus are perceived as the true light (Wis 7:10; John 1:9).<sup>1531</sup> The concept of light is, thus, related to God, wisdom and Jesus; it defines the life of God, and it becomes a metaphor for the communion with God as well (Wis 1:2; John 12:36).

The metaphorical structuring we perceive here is LIFE IS LIGHT. The meaning of light as the source concept is non-metaphorical. The first aspect of life defined as light is that it promotes life.<sup>1532</sup> This quality can be observed in Wis and John as well. God manifests himself to the righteous (1:2) that “will run like sparks” in the Kingdom of God after death (3:7). Here we can see that God’s life (eternal life) promotes the life of the righteous. So this is another instance of the metaphor that views the general phenomenon of immortality as the cause of individual immortality. The believer is promised τὸ φῶς τῆς ζωῆς in John 8:12. Here again the life of Jesus (and God) is described as promoting individual life. But life defined as light also has another implication: life is viewed in ethical terms. The righteous/believer that receives a new existence as the child of God (Wis 2:13; John 12:36) gains knowledge, learns how to live according to God (Wis 2:13; 7:13-21; 9:18; John 13:4-17; 14:12, 15). Light becomes the metaphor for moral goodness, in opposition to darkness as evil (Wis 7:29-30; John 1:5).<sup>1533</sup> The righteous/believer

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<sup>1530</sup> For the parallels, see Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, liv; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1:CXXIII; Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 274; see also Witherington, *John's Wisdom*, 157; Ringe, *Wisdom's Friends*, 49, 61; Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 99; Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 131, 278.

<sup>1531</sup> See Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, liv. Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:241-242, also finds parallels with Wis 7:10, 26, saying that the light brought by Jesus and wisdom is “a vital force” that gives man “a divinely spiritual life which is holy and blessed”; cf. Wis 7:27.

<sup>1532</sup> See the properties of the light domain when used non-metaphorically in Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 58.

<sup>1533</sup> Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 376-377, parallels Wis 18:4 with John 9; 8:12: “The two levels of discussion about physical and spiritual sight and insight and physical and spiritual blindness [in John] are meant to make much the same point as is made in Wisdom 18, especially in regard to the fact that Jesus says not merely that his followers are being given light but also that his opponents are being deprived of light (John 9:39, ‘I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may be deprived of light’). The two-level discussion of wonders in John and the Wisdom of Solomon is made possible because both authors have a theology of eternal life and its negative counterpart. This theology, in the way it is

walks in the light, while the wicked/unbeliever walks in the darkness (Wis 5:6-7; 17:2-18:4; John 8:12; 12:35-36).<sup>1534</sup> Acting properly also involves that the followers have to mediate the light to others (Wis 18:4; John 1:7-8). The way of life of the righteous exposes the wrong way of living of the wicked in Wis 2:14-16, echoed by John 3:19-21 where the coming of light casts judgment on the darkness.

#### 4.2.1.8 *Immortality and Life in Terms of Knowledge*

Similarly to other concepts that define immortality and eternal life, knowledge is also a relational concept. Wis and John argue that only the children of God have knowledge of God (Wis 2:13; John 3:3, 5). Wis 2:21-22 says that the wicked does not know the secret purposes of God, that man was created for incorruption (2:22-23). Moreover, the philosophers' failure to see God behind the creation (Wis 13:1-5) shows that true knowledge only comes from wisdom; without her, there is only perception by the senses, but not recognition. John 8:19, 55; 17:25 likewise argues that those who do not accept Jesus have no knowledge of God.<sup>1535</sup> It is only wisdom and Jesus who bring this knowledge to people. Therefore it is a gift of God.

Knowledge in both texts has cosmological, but also ontological sense. On the one hand it means to know the world, God and his saving plan for humankind<sup>1536</sup>—and this also has an ethical dimension, to know good and evil and to act properly (Wis 2:13-16; 7:13-21; 15:2-3; John 13:4-17; 14:12). On the other hand, knowledge in both texts is connected to the status of the righteous as the child of God; it implies a new existence.<sup>1537</sup> Wis 2:13 says that the righteous has

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expressed, reflects the use of sapiential language to cope with an idea that very likely does not appear in the Wisdom corpus before the Wisdom of Solomon—the idea of a positive afterlife.”

<sup>1534</sup> Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, lvi, noted the parallel between Wis 17:21 and John 12:35.

<sup>1535</sup> Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 156, observes the parallel between the ideas of Wis 13:1 (that God is knowable through the world he has made, but the world does not know him) and that of John 1:10; 17:25 (that says that God—through the Logos—is present in the world, but the world does not know him). Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 102, also notes that the contrast between presence and recognition occurs in both texts; he refers to John 1:10a and Wis 8:1.

<sup>1536</sup> See Wis 1:13-14; 2:22-23; 7:17-22a; 8:3-4, 8; 15:2-3; John 3:12-18; 17:3. Witherington, *John's Wisdom*, 157, 160, mentions Wis 8:8, while Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 142, mentions Wis 8:3-4 as parallels for the knowledge in John. Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, lvi, parallels Wis 15:3 and John 17:3.

<sup>1537</sup> Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 1:257: knowledge in John is not a “theoretical attitude, a rational apprehension, but the willing acceptance of instruction from God,” parallel to what is formulated in

knowledge of God and professes to be the child of God. John 3:3, 5 shows that birth of God leads to understanding.<sup>1538</sup> Scott<sup>1539</sup> notices that Wis 8:3-4 does not only mention love, but also knowledge and participating in God's work which are the characteristics of Jesus' intimacy with the Father.<sup>1540</sup> Knowledge, therefore, is a relational concept that appears as the characteristic of the relation between wisdom and God (Wis 8:3-4; 9:9), the Son and the Father (John 5:20),<sup>1541</sup> and as an extension, a characteristic of the relation between God and the righteous/believer (Wis 2:13; John 8:19). As a consequence, only those who are in relation with God can get to know God (John 15:15; Wis 7:7-14). We can define knowledge as one aspect of the life with God, in other words, one aspect of immortality and eternal life. Το τὸ γὰρ ἐπίστασθαί σε ὁλόκληρος δικαιοσύνη καὶ εἰδέναι σου τὸ κράτος ῥίζα ἀθανασίας<sup>1542</sup> (Wis 15:3) there is an allusion in John 17:3: αὕτη δέ ἐστιν ἡ αἰώνιος ζωὴ ἵνα γινώσκωσιν σὲ τὸν μόνον ἀληθινὸν θεὸν καὶ ὃν ἀπέστειλας Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν.<sup>1543</sup> Murphy<sup>1544</sup> points out the possible interpretation of *might* in Wis 15:3 against the OT concept of death and Wis 15:5, 7 that speaks of dead idols, thus arguing for the meaning of "God's death-destroying power."<sup>1545</sup> "If this understanding of Wis 15,3 is correct, the use made of it in Jn 17,3 . . . reflects the same idea: God's power to dispense eternal life. In 17,2 our Lord mentions that God has 'given him power over all flesh, to give eternal life. . . .' This is power over death; it is not power tempered by mercy, a Providence that leads man to repent."<sup>1546</sup>

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Wis 9:9-18. Cf. Wis 5:7; 10:8; Sir 1:16-18; 7:25; 8:16; 6:27; 18:28; Bar 3:10-14, 23, 31f; 4:13; Prov 1:2; 4:1; 9:10; 13:15; 30:3.

<sup>1538</sup> Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 146, observes that there is no concrete revelation of knowledge in John or Wis; the most concrete is in Wis 7:17-22, "but basically her role there is as a reflection of God (Wis. 7.25-27), a role which is given to Jesus in John 12.45; 14.9." Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 146, continues, "what she imparts is what she knows from her intimate relationship with God (Prov. 8.22; Wis. 7.25-28; Sir. 24.8)." See also Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 152-155, 233.

<sup>1539</sup> See Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 140.

<sup>1540</sup> See John 3:35; 5:20; 10:17; 14:31; 15:9; 17:24-26 for love, 1:18; 7:29; 8:55; 10:15; 17:25 for knowledge, and 5:19-30 for the unity of will.

<sup>1541</sup> See Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, lv.

<sup>1542</sup> For to know you is complete righteousness, and to know your power is the root of immortality.

<sup>1543</sup> And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

<sup>1544</sup> Murphy, "To Know Your Might is the Root of Immortality," 88-93.

<sup>1545</sup> Murphy, "To Know Your Might is the Root of Immortality," 93.

<sup>1546</sup> Murphy, "To Know Your Might is the Root of Immortality," 93.

All these aspects of knowledge mirror that knowledge is linked to the communion with God. And since it defines life with God, it can be a metaphor for eternal life/immortality.<sup>1547</sup>

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<sup>1547</sup> Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannesevangelium," 42, argues that in both texts (Wis 15:3 and John 17:3) knowledge implies communion with God and it is the quality of life.

## 5 General Conclusion

This dissertation was aimed at comparing the perspectives on immortality and eternal life in Wis and John. I departed from a premise that there are conceptual affinities between Wis and John that shows their analogous thinking as the history of research has proved. My hypothesis was that the similarities and differences that are to be explored would tell us more about the relation between wisdom literature and John, and that John's relationship with Wis can strengthen the assumption that John used wisdom conceptual framework to develop his own ideas of the world and life in the light of Jesus. Although several notable studies have come out that reflect on the similarities between John and wisdom literature (in many cases including Wis), the particularity of this present study is that it focused on comparing one text with John and one central theme. I chose the concepts of immortality and eternal life as a basis for comparison because the texts of Wis and John are run through with the discussion on these concepts. Moreover, immortality and eternal life serve as *compass points* for other concepts as well, such as knowledge, peace, power, faith, love, kinship, as well as the doctrine of God, human life and death.

The starting point of the research was that immortality and eternal life are complex ideas, and the correspondences are present not only on the textual level but on the conceptual level as well. Therefore, after I have extended the definition of *text* to include ideas and worldview as well, the research involved the analysis of technical terms and their contexts, as well as the way the concepts of immortality and eternal life are perceived and linked to other concepts to form a coherent worldview in Wis and John.

What I basically did is to point out the similarities and the notable differences—I did not make any formal distinction between parallels as allusions or echoes. The procedure was to analyse and describe the concept of immortality in Wis, then the concept of eternal life in John to get the whole picture, and end with the comparison of the two texts. The analysis was thematic; it focused on the concepts of immortality and eternal life. Naturally, since these concepts interweave with other concepts, the discussion has also been extended to the concepts that are in a way related to immortality and eternal life, as well as the way these are linked together and imbedded in the theology of the books.

My research has confirmed that Wis and John is not only analogous in the way they think of immortality and eternal life, but that their worldview—the way they structure these concepts in themselves and in relation to other concepts, as well as the way they implement them in their cosmology—is very similar. They firmly project an afterlife for the righteous and the believer in the idea of immortality and eternal life. They both see qualitative and quantitative features of immortality and eternal life. The basic feature of immortality and eternal life is communion with God, which starts with the creation—John echoes Wis in claiming that God created man for living—and is realized in the union of the righteous with wisdom and Jesus that bring the life of God to those who believe. The optimistic creation and salvation theology of Wis and John is based on the idea of an almighty God who loves and saves humankind. Immortality and eternal life is further described qualitatively in terms of family, kingship, friendship, knowledge, light, peace, being in the hand of God and love. All these concepts have relational feature: only in communion with wisdom and Jesus can one share these qualities. In the context of the three realms man's fate is determined depending on his choice. Wis and John both perceive the present and future aspects of immortality and eternal life: the righteous and the believer are claimed to have life that will come to full realization after their physical death. If we want to understand light fully, we have to look at darkness as well. With the aim of a deeper understanding of the concepts of immortality and eternal life, the concepts set as antithesis, death and judgment were also considered.

The analysis of the texts has demonstrated that the similarities mostly occur at the conceptual level and not in language, which shows conceptual and cultural overlap—the difference between Wis and John may be that of the culture and subculture. This has led scholars to argue for a supposed common background to account for the similarities. Our study has confirmed the huge amount of similarities between Wis and John, and it also observed the way they are related to their theologies. This justifies the claim that the nature of the relationship between Wis and John is that of a common background, and it perhaps also reinforces the presumption that there is a conscious internalizing of wisdom ideas on the part of John in order to develop and unfold the concept of eternal life in another context that has developed around the risen Christ. With this, we can also give a possible answer to the question *what the relationship between Wis and John adds to John*. The creative use of wisdom framework on the one hand included understanding

and acceptance on the part of the audience familiar with wisdom, while on the other hand it gave John the possibility to outgrow this framework by the idea of a new life from God through Jesus.

In discussing the concepts of immortality and eternal life and other related ideas, I have touched upon the cultural background; however, the analysis of the specific cultural elements that influence Wis and John in their worldview would be the aim of another study. A further research could also provide the answer to the question to what extent the tradition and culture might have influenced John through the mediation of Wis.

I admit that a different method could produce a different outcome; similar studies may result in diverse and different understanding. I also admit that the discussion could have probably been extended. Nevertheless, I believe that I succeeded in pointing out the similarities in concept and worldview in John and Wis. This is due particularly to the focus on the analysis of central concepts, immortality and eternal life—imbedded in the thought pattern/linked to other concepts—, to show how deep the parallels between Wis and John run. Further, the method I chose also has a word in the success. It is my expectation that my research would prove effective in the ongoing comparative study between wisdom literature and John. It hopefully adds to the perspective on the sapiential indebtedness of John and contributes to giving new depths to the reading of the NT text, while it again might raise the possibility that John, at least, was familiar with the ideas present in Wis.

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## Summary

The similarities between the Fourth Gospel and wisdom literature have been addressed by many scholars. This study is also intended to continue along this line by looking at the particular link between the Wisdom of Solomon and the Gospel of John with a specific focus on the concepts of immortality and eternal life. It was presumed that this approach will add to our knowledge and cognition of the Fourth Gospel's cultural and conceptual background.

The theology of the texts in general was not the focus of this research. However, in order to have a proper understanding of these concepts, it was necessary to investigate into the themes, the patterns of thought related to them, as well as the worldview of the texts of the Book of Wisdom and the Gospel of John. To this aim the cosmological framework in which the concepts of immortality and eternal life are imbedded was examined, followed by an analysis of the various metaphors that conceive of immortality and eternal life. The metaphors they blend with, the coherence and cohesion between them, and the way they are imbedded in the theology as a whole have also been observed. The insights of cognitive linguistics were of great help in understanding the concepts of immortality and eternal life and the way they function in the context and theology of the Book of Wisdom and the Gospel of John. During this process the similarities in concept and worldview were uncovered, as well as the differences that are essential to understanding the concepts of immortality and eternal life in the Book of Wisdom and the Gospel of John.

From this study it becomes apparent that although we can grasp some differences as well, the Book of Wisdom and the Gospel of John share similar view about God, the world, human life, and the relation between them. They also share the conviction that immortality and eternal life are related to the communion with God. The metaphors that qualify or extend this state in the two texts show great affinity. This study, hopefully, contributes to a deeper understanding of how the ideas, motives, structures taken over from wisdom framework function in John's theology and strengthen the assumption that John built on the concepts and worldview of sapiential thought to develop his own ideas of the world and life in the light of Jesus. The similarities may even suggest that beyond the common background John was, at least, familiar with the ideas incorporated in the Book of Wisdom.

## Samenvatting

De overeenkomsten tussen het Vierde Evangelie en de wijsheidsliteratuur hebben de aandacht van veel wetenschappers getrokken. Deze studie is er dan ook een voortzetting van en bekijkt de bijzondere verbinding tussen de Wijsheid van Solomon en het Evangelie van Johannes met een speciale aandacht voor de begrippen onsterfelijkheid en eeuwig leven. Dat gebeurt in de veronderstelling dat deze benaderingswijze een bijdrage levert aan onze kennis en verstaan van de culturele achtergrond en het begrippenapparaat van het Vierde Evangelie.

In het algemeen is de theologie van de teksten niet het aandachtsveld van dit onderzoek. Echter om een goed begrip van deze concepten te krijgen is het noodzakelijk nader onderzoek te doen naar de thema's, de gedachtesystemen die er betrekking op hebben, maar ook naar de visie op de wereld van de teksten in het Boek van de Wijsheid en het Evangelie van Johannes. Met dat doel is het kosmologisch denkpatroon waarin de begrippen van onsterfelijkheid en eeuwig leven een plaats hebben, onderzocht. Daarop volgde een analyse van de verschillende metaforen die met onsterfelijkheid en eeuwig leven te maken hebben. Er is ook nader ingegaan op de metaforen die ermee te maken hebben, de samenhang en de verbindingen. Deze metaforen zijn gemengd wat betreft de samenstelling en de cohesie ervan en de manier waarin zij in de theologie als een geheel thuis horen. De inzichten van de methode van de *objective linguistics* waren daarbij een grote hulp om de concepten van onsterfelijkheid en eeuwig leven en de manier van de functionering ervan in de context en theologie van het Boek van de Wijsheid en het Evangelie van Johannes te onderkennen. Gedurende dit proces zijn de overeenkomsten in verstaan en wereldvisie duidelijk geworden evenals de verschillen die noodzakelijk zijn om de begrippen van onsterfelijkheid en eeuwig leven in het Boek van de Wijsheid en het Evangelie volgens Johannes te begrijpen.

Op basis van deze studie is het duidelijk dat zij ondanks het feit dat we verschillen kunnen constateren, dezelfde visie delen over God, het wereldbeeld, het menselijk leven en de verhoudingen ertussen. Zij dragen ook bij aan de overtuiging dat eeuwig leven en onsterfelijkheid te maken hebben met de gemeenschap met God. De metaforen met de eigen karakteristieken of die verbreden in de twee teksten, tonen grote verwantschap.

Hopelijk draagt deze studie bij tot een dieper verstaan van de manier waarop de ideeën, motieven, structuren, overgenomen van de wijsheidsliteratuur, functioneren in de theologie van Johannes en de veronderstelling bevestigen dat Johannes voortbouwde op de begrippen en de wereldvisie van de wijsheidsgedachten en die ontwikkelde tot zijn eigen ideeën van de wereld en het leven in het licht van Jezus. De overeenkomsten kunnen zelfs de suggestie wekken dat buiten de gemeenschappelijke achtergrond Johannes uiteindelijk vertrouwd was met de ideeën die in het Boek van de Wijsheid te vinden zijn.